

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of God, the most gracious, the most merciful

Sikhs & Islam

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Below are a series of objections from a member of the Sikh religion. They have been adapted from the original messages we received, but the main gist of the objections were kept so that the readers may understand what the Islamic responses to such objections would be. We have separated the objections in "sessions" based on the number of messages we received in this respect.

As a side note, the opponent's comments are in bold font while our responses are in normal (non-bold) font.

Session #1:

An article on your site¹ says tries to say that Sahib Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji Maharaj is either a false prophet or a Muslim. He is neither a prophet nor a Muslim.

If someone asks why this is so, he is not a prophet because he is Satguru which Means The One who has Meditated in the Court, and it is up to the people to decide which is superior.

The author of the article on our site mentions that he believes "Guru Nanak" to be either a false prophet or someone whose followers falsely claimed prophethood for him.

Putting aside the intricacies of why Sikhs may not accept the term "Prophet" for "Guru Nanak", the truth is that as soon as someone steps into the forefront and says that the existing religions are not to be followed in full, and their own message which they claim to be Divine Inspiration is the true path, then they are in effect claiming to have received revelation from God.

Whether Sikhs call him a Prophet or another title is of little importance in the whole scheme of things, since they do claim that there was a problem in the existing religions – including Islam- which "Guru Nanak" supposedly claim to rectify. This is the main problem we have with the Sikh claims, regardless of what title is put on "Guru Nanak". We will discuss the matter of "meditation in the court" later on, but this is what we need to bring forth at this specific time.

¹ In reference to the article "10 Questions to Sikhs", which had previously been on our old site.

(As an aside, certain links we have found do present the Gurus as Prophets. For example, in the following link² we read:

The Guru is not an incarnation of God. He is a humble prophet or messenger, invested with the duty of showing the true spiritual way to ordinary people.

Perhaps then, this matter may be an issue of doctrinal difference among the Sikhs, which the original objector may have been unaware of.)

If Sikh religion starts to spread the falsehood of Islam will be thrown out from this world.

This is unfortunately an appeal to emotions, and it does not have anything to do with the discussion at hand. If it can be shown that the Sikh religion is indeed true then the situation is different, but to simply make this statement at the beginning of a discussion is strange. It also seems to imply that we Muslims should somehow be thankful to the Sikhs that they have not "spread the falsehood of Islam" throughout the world. This is an appeal to the supposed superiority of Sikhism in refraining from condemning other religions, but this one of the contested topics subject to discussion, and one cannot claim the superiority of a religion by making a simple direct (or indirect) claim to that effect, since it would constitute circular reasoning.

Muslims say that Guru Nanak was a Muslim, but the following quote shows that such is not the case:

I am not a Hindu, nor am I a Muslim. My body and breath of life belong to Allah - to Raam - the God of both. ||4|| (Guru Granth Sahib Ji, Ang 1136)

This shows that Guru Ji never accepted teachings of Islam and Hinduism. There are many names of God and Sikhs accept that. This is why Guru Ji used both names saying that He is not taking any sides. He is teaching to unite humanity together literally under ONE GOD.

I do not make pilgrimages to Mecca, nor do I worship at Hindu sacred shrines. I serve the One Lord, and not any other. ||2|| I do not perform Hindu worship services, nor do I offer the Muslim prayers. I have taken the One Formless Lord into my heart; I humbly worship Him there. ||3|| (Guru Granth Sahib Ji, Ang 1136)

It is not a matter of the necessities of the Islamic religion to believe that "Guru Nanak" was a Muslim, so there is no need to bring up this matter very forcefully

² <http://www.gurmat.info/sms/smspublications/introductiontosikhism2/chapter3.html>, accessed on the 7th December 2012

as a subject of argumentation. It is also doubtful that we accept his going to Makkah as put forth in Sikh scriptures, since there is no documentation from our side describing such a journey. If we were to deeply analyze the alleged trip to Makkah, it would have to be based on the Sikh scriptures, and whether what they describe is plausible or not.

We should point out though, that the quotes brought forward, if they are taken to have actually been said by "Guru Nanak", show without a speck of doubt that he saw something or the other wrong with the Islamic religion, which is why he felt compelled to say things that showed his disapproval of Islamic prayer or pilgrimage.

We also need to stress that the phrase "My body and breath of life belong to Allah- to Ram- the God of both", shows a deep misunderstanding about the Islamic religion. This is because Allah is the name of the only Divine Being; Allah is not a demiurge-like figure that can be considered to be subsumed under a "higher God". If this is truly what Sikhs think that Allah means to the Muslims, then this is a particularly grave misunderstanding; if they say this was "Guru Nanak's" thinking as well, then we have to say that this was a very wrong idea from his side about Muslims.

If the Sikhs say that this was simply Nanak's way of saying that all religions should come together under the worship of one God, we respond by saying that the referent in cases of "Ram" or "Jesus" refer to theological conceptions that are outright rejected by Muslims, since such conceptions invariably liken Allah to His Creation one way or the other. Thus, it is not a matter of different namings used to name the Divine Being, but rather totally different conceptions of the Divine Being which we as Muslims can never accept.

Additionally, we say that Muhammad ﷺ already came to invite mankind to the worship of one God without any partners, and there was no need for further Prophets or "Gurus" to come after him. And when we consider that "Guru Nanak" seemed to consider lightly the actual huge theological differences between Islam and Hinduism (and also other religions), there is no way that the learned Muslim will take what he says in this respect as being correct.

This shows that Guru Ji did not visit Mecca to worship Allah. Instead, He went for different reasons. Muslims believe that God is in the west and only likes Muslims. Guru Ji visited Mecca to clear their doubts and to show them the right path. He went to preach oneness of God who does not reside only in the west.

To start off, there is no record amongst us of a trip having been undertaken by "Guru Nanak" to Makkah, since a number of the things mentioned in such stories (which will be mentioned later) are very dramatic and it would have been impossible for the common Muslim historians not to have mentioned something

about this, even if such a mention was loaded with negative comments directed towards "Guru Nanak". But we do not find any such mention in our history, and this is the first point of doubt which is raised in our minds.

But let us imagine for a moment that the version presented by the Sikhs is true, and that the sayings attributed to him are correct. It is our contention that such reports narrated from Sikhs are even quite problematic in and of themselves, since it lends support to the fact that he seemed to have little knowledge about Islam and our understanding of God.

For example, it was mentioned that for us, we believe that God resides in the West, or that He lives in the Ka'bah. This is a great misinformation about our belief in Allah: It is the Muslim belief that Allah exists without a place or location, and this is one of the most basic and important of Islamic beliefs. So if "Guru Nanak" went to "show" Muslims that Allah "does not only reside in the West", then we are afraid that his trip was based on a very flawed understanding of Islam, and that in fact the trip served no true purpose as far as "correcting wrong Muslim beliefs" was concerned. We strongly advise all readers to read up on Islamic belief with works such as the 'Aqidah of Tuan Guru³, so that they will not be confused about what our belief is.

Also, the intent of this story was to supposedly show the Sikh belief that "God is everywhere". This statement is deeply problematic for anyone to say, and if any person says it intending a literal meaning, then he has committed one of the biggest blasphemies he can possibly commit. This is because "everywhere" is a way of saying "all created locations", and literally uniting the Creator with the creation is a problem that all the non-Muslim religions make in one way or the other. Unfortunately, it seems as if Sikhism also makes the same error, of claiming "formlessness" to God in one place but then saying that He is "everywhere" in the next. These are the types of theological problems in Sikhism that we need to point out, and which we encourage our readers to ponder about whenever considering our firm conviction that Islam is the only correct religion, and that other religions – including Sikhism- are incorrect.

Guru Ji said there are an infinity heavens, hells and solar systems. There is no end to God or His creation.

If this is truly the Sikh position on the issue of "infinity of Creations", then there is disagreement between us and them concerning this matter, since (among other proofs), it is known from the Qur'an that the actions and deeds of all creation have been counted and numbered, and this is impossible if we were to posit an actual infinity of creations. We do not say that it is not within Allah's

³ Available at: <http://defendingislam10.files.wordpress.com/2012/02/sanusiiyahabdullahalmalali.pdf>. As our readers will know, the 'Guru' in here is simply a title, and there is no religious connotation attached to it in Islam.

Power to create billions of planets similar to our own, but we say that the textual evidence does not point to this.

It is also interesting that “heavens” and “hells” are mentioned by our opponent, even though the Sikh religion believes that such places should not exist, since the real reward of a person according to them is to enter the “Court of God”, and the punishment is the inability to achieve this and as a consequence be trapped in the cycle of rebirth.

Regarding “Guru Nanak’s” trip to Makkah, the following should be read:

Donning blue attire then Baba Nanak went to Mecca. He held staff in his hand, pressed a book under his armpit, caught hold of a metal pot and mattress. Now he sat in a mosque where the pilgrims (hajis) had gathered. When Baba (Nanak) slept in the night spreading his legs towards the alcove of mosque at Kaba, the qazi named Jivan kicked him and asked who was this infidel enacting blasphemy. Why this sinner is sleeping his legs spread towards God, Khuda. Catching hold of the legs he lynched (Baba Nanak) and lo and behold the miracle, the whole of Mecca seemed to be revolving. All got surprised and they all bowed. (Bhai Gurdas Ji, Var 1, page 1)

This story seems very suspicious at the outset. A ‘Qadhi’ (written as Qazi in here) is a scholar of Islam of the highest caliber, and it would seem totally out of place for him to say that anyone who sleeps in the direction of the Ka’ba is actually sleeping towards God, since as explained above this is not the Islamic belief to begin with.

Another suspicious aspect which is mentioned with respect to the stories of “Guru Nanak” going to Makkah is the attire worn by him. In the pictures claimed to be representations of “Guru Nanak’s” “Hajj attire” (which can be seen [here](#) and [here](#)), he is shown with a turban on his head, something which is definitely not allowed during the Hajj itself, and something which would immediately indicate to the other pilgrims that the person wearing this is not performing Hajj. Thus, if it is said that “Guru Nanak” was doing Hajj in this manner, then this is from among the claims brought forth by the Sikhs which are incompatible with Islam due to their lack of knowledge concerning the Islamic religion.

Also the very dramatic narration is brought forth of the entire city of Makkah being shaken and revolving at the beating of “Guru Nanak”, along with the supposed bowing of all the Muslims in there. This is also a strange matter, since such a thing is not mentioned in our history books – not even mentioned in such a way that would make “Guru Nanak” seem like an evil person, which is what would have undoubtedly been recorded had such a narration been present in our works.

Qazi and maulvis got together and began discussing religion. A great fantasy has been created and no one could understand its mystery. They asked Baba Nanak to open and search in his book whether Hindu is great or the Muslim. Baba replied to the pilgrim hajis that, without good deeds both will have to weep and wail. Only by being a Hindu or a Muslim one can not get accepted in the court of the Lord. (Bhai Gurdas Ji, Var 1, page 1)

Again, it is an odd thing to mention that the highest level of Islamic scholars would ask anyone whether a Hindu or a Muslim is great, since it is already certain in our hearts that the status of the Muslim and the Islamic religion is the correct one, and all other religions are invalid. Even asking about this matter (in the sense of actually wanting to know the answer) is indicative of disbelief, since it would show that there is doubt in the heart of the questioner regarding the exclusive correctness of the Islamic religion.

In here we also have to point out what the Islamic religion says with respect to good deeds and its relationship with proper belief. It is our position that there has to be a combination of the correct uncorrupted belief in the heart of a person, along with the establishment of certain obligatory practices by that person before it can be said that such a person will gain acceptance from Allah. The establishment of obligatory practices is not mere rigid legalism, but the realization of our commitment to carry out that which Allah has asked us to fulfill, since we have accepted Allah as our Lord who has the right to legislate whatever He wills for his Creatures to do, and we have also accepted that Muhammad ﷺ is the person appointed by Allah to convey to us the message that Allah willed for all humanity to follow.

Once these two principles are set in the mind of a person, there is really no confusion or doubt as to why certain things have been made obligatory while others have been legislated as prohibited, along with the other rules that the Islamic religion has attached to various acts. With respect to the Hindu –or anyone else- doing ‘good deeds’, it is our firm position that their ‘good deeds’ have only a limited benefit for them. Such people will definitely reap their rewards in this world and perhaps “gain” a lesser punishment in the Hereafter, but they will not be able to gain entry into Paradise on the back of good deeds only, since the proper belief is the enabler through which every single deed done by the human begins is taken into consideration by Allah the Exalted.

With regards to the statement that by “only being a Muslim” one cannot gain entry into Paradise, we contest this saying, since being a Muslim is the requirement for any person to enter Paradise. If it is said that why is it that those who are Muslim by name only get to enter Paradise, we say that Islam and being a Muslim is not a matter of a name, but rather an issue of whether the true faith has entered the heart of a person and whether the limbs of the person follow

through with the requirements of the correct religion connected with that faith in the heart.

Now, if there is some real matter to be considered, such as the possibility that a given person may not have heard the true message of Islam, or that a person may have had true faith in his heart but due to some real physical deficiency he may have not been able to carry out the requirements of the Islamic religion, then this is another issue that can be discussed separately, but indeed there is no excuse for the person who knows about Islam and with his full senses and mind decides to reject it, and yet holds that his "good deeds" will lead him to salvation. This is the stream of thinking that we seek to eradicate, since this is what is unacceptable with Allah the Exalted.

Guru Ji preached the truth and by listening to Him Muslims treated Him as their Pir (Holy Saint). Muslims believed God spoke through "Guru Nanak" Dev Ji.

If such is the case, then "Guru Nanak" would have been extolled in our writings with the title of 'Reviver of Islam' or something similar – and this is supposing that the statement "God spoke through "Guru Nanak" " is interpreted in a way that is not blasphemous. But there is no such statement found in our books. Of course it is not strange that we cannot find such a statement, since based on the answers that "Guru Nanak" supposedly gave related to Islamic belief, we know that his answers were very superficial and showed clear misunderstandings about the Islamic faith.

When he was about to leave, Muslims asked Him to leave something of His behind. So he left his slippers which the priest kept inside Mecca that time. When the priest retired he took it with him back to his home and his family still has this slipper. This is how much respect the Muslims had and have for "Guru Nanak" Sahib Ji.

There has to be some substantiation of this claim. It is said that "Guru Nanak's" slippers were left with "the priest" (note that Islam does not have 'priests', but rather 'Aalims, Imams, etc.), and that this pair of slippers was placed in the Ka'bah before being taken back with the "priest", where it remains up to this day.

On this point, we have to comment that it seems very strange that the shoes of anyone would be placed inside the Ka'bah, since if the story as shown above were correct, there would have to be a permission from the custodian of the Ka'bah and from many of the scholars of Islam residing in Makkah in order for such shoes to be kept inside the Ka'bah.

We also need to make one comment related to the supposed "respect" we Muslims have for "Guru Nanak": If it is said that there are some Muslims who see

him as their leader or as a 'Saint', then this is the mistaken assumption of those Muslims based on their limited knowledge of the Islamic religion and what are the boundaries of Islam. But it cannot be said that this is the view of the Islamic religion, specially since there is no Islamic scholar who holds "Guru Nanak" in a positive light- as it is only the Islamic scholars who can say what constitutes the acceptable or non-acceptable sayings and actions in Islam, and the sayings or opinions of the laymen are not counted when making statements about Islam. Indeed, the only place where we have found this "respect" being given is on a Qadyani site, and for the Muslim religion, the Qadyanis and their positions are summarily dismissed and not taken into account, since Qadyanism is a non-Muslim religion with its distinct religious hierarchy, texts, and reasoning which are not acceptable in Islam.

Addressing the same question⁴, Bhai Manvir Singh has summarized (the answers) very well by saying that if "Guru Nanak" Sahib Ji had been a Muslim he would have done the following:

As we had mentioned before, the initial article on our site which was the subject of criticism does not categorically mention that "Guru Nanak" was a Muslim, and neither is "Guru Nanak's" Islam or lack thereof a matter of the necessities of our religion.

Yes, it may be argued by Muslims that "Guru Nanak" was a Muslim and then his teachings were changed later on by his followers and turned into a new religion, but in the bigger picture of our discussions with Sikhs, it makes very little difference whether Sikhism started with "Guru Nanak" or whether it started some time later. The main problems we have with Sikhism are concerning its unacceptable religious doctrines and beliefs, and these can be discussed without having to go back every time to the issue of "Guru Nanak's" Islam.

However, we thought that it is necessary to answer some of the 'refutations' brought forth above by the Sikh reader since they show a shallow understanding of Islam.

1. He would have written the whole Muslim Kalima or at least Bismillah ur Rehman ur Rahim at the head of every composition.

To begin with, it is not customary for Muslims to write the Kalimah (La ilaha illa Allah Muhammadur Rasul Allah) at the start of their compositions, and we have never noticed anyone doing this.

With regards to the Bismillah, then this is done by many Muslims, but refraining from this practice is also not indicative of a person being a non-Muslim, since

⁴ Of whether Guru Nanak was a Muslim or not.

there is no obligation to start a letter or a correspondence with 'Bismillah'. This is specially the case since there is a prohibition on throwing away anything that has 'Allah' written on it, so in many cases we Muslims may use other forms of openings which show that we have started our writing in the name of Allah while not specifically writing down the name 'Allah'.

2. He would not have produced another set of hymns when the Quran was available already.

There is no prohibition on a Muslim composing poetry or any other work extolling the Prophet ﷺ, or Islam in general, even though the Holy Qur'an has already been revealed. In fact, the amount of praise that has been written by Muslims concerning different aspects related to the Islamic religion in both poetry and prose is so much to be virtually uncountable.

The only objection that could be raised was if such writing was written in an attempt to imitate the Qur'an, in which case the person doing this is unquestionably a non-Muslim. However, the writing of poetry or anything else in praise of Allah or His Messenger ﷺ will not render the person out of Islam in and of itself.

3. He would himself have initiated Bhai Lehna Ji (the second Sikh Guru) to Islam and instructed him to visit Mecca for Hajj (pilgrimage - one of the five pillars of Islam) every year. Neither any Guru nor their followers visited Mecca after "Guru Nanak" Sahib Ji.

The first portion of this statement supposes that someone has to be initiated inside Islam by a Qadhi, etc. This may be true with respect to new converts, and only for the purpose of letting the community at large know that the person is a Muslim and should be treated exactly like other Muslims, even though true conversion takes place in one's heart, is between the person and Allah, and may or may not coincide with any official verbal/written public declaration the person gives. Notwithstanding, it is not necessary that the Islam of every student of a given teacher be specifically verified by the latter, since the criteria in Islam is that if someone comes to us and says that he is a Muslim, we should not doubt his word without a stronger proof to contradict it.

This is with respect to the 'initiation' matter in general. We know that in the case of "Guru Nanak" this takes a dimension related to the historicity of the event (or lack thereof) mentioned above, but as we had mentioned before this is not a topic of great importance in our discussion, since even if "Guru Nanak" was not a Muslim, it does not change the relevance of the other subjects we are talking about.

With respect to the "instruction" to visit Makkah every year for Hajj, it is only an obligation for the Muslim to partake in Hajj once in his lifetime if he is able to do so. Thus, it is not an intrinsic part of Islam for any teacher to tell his students to go for Hajj every year. In fact, it is the case that most Muslims even today are unable to go for Hajj (even for once in their lives) either due to financial or physical constraints, in spite of the relative ease associated with going for Hajj in our times. With respect to whether any of the latter Gurus or their followers visited Makkah, then this is again a matter of historicity, and since we readily accept Sikhism to be a different religion, there is no use in bringing up this matter from its historical angle.

4. He would have copiously praised the Quran and mentioned the name of the Hazrat Mohammed reverently. There is nothing to that effect in Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji.

5. He would not have criticized the Muslim practices. His invectives especially against Roza (fasting) and Qazis (Muslim priests) are too much for a Muslim to swallow.

With respect to what is mentioned here, we object to the naming of 'Qazis' and 'Muslim priests' since a Qadhi is in fact a Muslim judge, in addition to the fact that priesthood is not part of the Islamic religion. Perhaps the author wanted to mention another title like 'Aalim or something to that effect. Concerning the supposed critique of fasting, our 'Ulama, and the lack of praise for Muhammad ﷺ, we are not pushing for "Guru Nanak" or any of the other Gurus to be termed a Muslim, and we know for a fact that the religious text of the Sikh religion does not have any connection to the Holy Qur'an.

So there is no difficulty in us accepting this issue, since we will attack Sikhism based on its faulty theological underpinning, not based on the history of its founders. Yes, if there is some attack made by the Sikhs on some of the rulings of Islam, in that case we will need to resort to the historical evidences of the lives of the Sikh teachers in order to give some reasoning for the Islamic position concerning that matter. But for the most part, we will try to avoid unnecessary meddling into Sikh history as much as we possibly can.

The Muslims need to consider some facts about their religion and Mohammad. Read some of the facts about Islam to see if Guru Ji would really follow Mohammad's teachings.

It was Mohammad who got so scared from the visions he was having. He would get so scared that he would run back to his house and hide under the bed. His wife who was thirteen years older than him took him to his uncle. Then his uncle told Mohammad that he would become

a prophet. But ironically it was the same uncle who said to Mohammad, "I would rather die than have faith in you."

Here we need to give an explanation of the matters presented, since there seems to be a lot of sloppy work in quoting the reality of things.

To start off, the incident shown above occurred in the early stages of Muhammad's ﷺ Prophethood, so it is improper to refer to it as a recurring action. Additionally, it is not right to merely call them 'visions', since the word 'visions' implies that the thing seen may only have occurred in one's mind and not in reality outside of one's mind, while the narrations point to the extra-mental reality of such events. Additionally, the phrase that Muhammad ﷺ said was: "'I fear that something may happen to me.'"⁵

This statement does not necessarily mean that he was afraid of the meeting with Jibril (Alayhi Salaam), nor does it necessitate doubt about his position as a Prophet of Allah. Rather, as mentioned by Qadi 'Iyad and referenced by Imam an-Nawawi, it could be that he feared that he may not have the strength to uphold such a matter and that he may not have been able to take on the very heavy load of inspiration and that he may become weary of it.⁶

Even if we were to suppose that he was initially afraid of the meeting with Jibril (Alayhi Salaam), we have to remember that this meeting is not something normal which occurs to every person, but rather something extremely special which is limited to very few people in the course of humanity. This is specially so when we remember that in Islam, the truth is not a matter of a spontaneous 'awakening' or 'liberating' experience done solely by meditation, but rather it is the contact of the person chosen by Allah with His appointed angels (or through whichever other means that Allah has decreed in that case). It is not abnormal for the person to experience certain physical reactions, such as sweating, feeling a higher heartbeat, and other similar things among those things that humans experience when an exceptional event occurs to them.

Also, the part about Muhammad's ﷺ meeting Khadijah's (Radhia Allahu Anha) uncle contains a severe misattribution, as her uncle did not say "*I would rather die than have faith in you*", but after telling Muhammad ﷺ that he would be driven out by his people her uncle said, "*if I should remain alive till the day when you will be turned out then I would support you strongly*", which indicates the exact opposite effect than what the presented (incorrect) statement would lead us to believe.

⁵ <http://www.usc.edu/schools/college/crcc/engagement/resources/texts/muslim/hadith/bukhari/001.sbt.html>

⁶ Sharh an-Nawawi 'ala Sahih Muslim, Vol.2, p.200 (shamela version)

Mohammad practiced polygamy. There is sufficient amount of evidence that shows that he had 13 wives.

The manner in which this is evil or blameworthy in the eyes of our opponent has not been made clear. However, it seems as if the method of scandalizing the other side has been adopted in here. Such a technique is ill-founded in this case, since the first thing that needs to be done is to show why polygamy is a universal evil before saying attributing this vice to anyone.

It is our firm belief that the actions of human beings do not have any intrinsic good or bad in them until we discover their 'good' and 'bad' status from Allah the Exalted. Thus, there is no judgment of an action without a judge to rule on the status of this action, and it is without a doubt that Allah is the judge who legislates what course of action human beings can and cannot take.

So in the case of polygamy, it has been judged by Allah the Exalted to be from among the permissible acts, and once this is known then there is no need to further discuss this matter. If someone were to say that this shows the inequality of men and women in Islam, we say that what Islam promotes between men and women is equity, not absolute equality.

Also, we say that Allah can legislate for the interactions between different creatures from among His Creation to be in whichever manner He wills, and there is no impossibility in this, since the different possibilities that may be applied in a society (polygyny, polyandry, or none of them) are all connected with His Will, and He has decreed that restricted polygyny is one of the types of marriage setups that is allowed.

With respect to the matter of the Prophet's ﷺ marriages, there are differences among the scholars of Islam and Islamic history as to how many wives the Prophet ﷺ had, but the number does not matter in our present discussion. What matters is whether such marriages were done within the limits set by Allah, and it is obvious that since a Prophet is divinely protected from committing a sin of this magnitude (as well as smaller sins as well), then his having 13 wives (or 11, according to the more correct view) is not problematic.

For those who hold that this is a problematic issue, this is not a result of the marriages themselves, but is rather the result of their not believing that Muhammad ﷺ is the Messenger of Allah. The marriages are actually brought as supposed evidence to show that he ﷺ wanted to do whatever he felt like while keeping his follower's actions at bay- may Allah save us from ever believing such a thing.

But as mentioned before, Allah can legislate for the interactions between different human beings to be whatever He wills, and there is no logical impossibility in Him declaring that the common Muslim can have up to 4 wives, while decreeing that the Prophet ﷺ could have more than that. So it all comes back to the issue of why we believe Islam to be the only correct religion among all the other faiths, and why we hold that the proofs for Muhammad's ﷺ Prophethood are decisive. If this issue is settled, then there is no need to discuss either this issue or any of the other legislative matters that crop up among the non-Muslim objectors to Islam.

He married the 6-year-old Ayesha, the daughter of his best friend Abu Bakr and thus the prophet became the son-in-law of his best friend.

This issue comes back again to whether one believes in the truth of Islam and that Muhammad ﷺ is the chosen Messenger of Allah, since there is nothing intrinsically wrong in Islam concerning a large age difference between husband and wife – whether the husband is much older than the wife or vice-versa.

Not only this, but we are unaware of any religion which explicitly disallows for people to marry at a very young age. At this point, we have to remind the readers that there is a difference between marriage and consummating relations with one's young bride, as the latter situation is not allowed in Islam until and unless the girl shows the signs of puberty.

Also, we sense that it is being objected that a person can establish close relations between himself and his close friends based on marriage. This is something which would obviously be rejected by people from different walks of life, as marriage has always been one of the most effective ways in which to bring different families together and strengthen already existing bonds.

If the reader thinks there is really something wrong with a person becoming the "son-in-law" of his friend (if the marriage itself was done based on correct principles) then this should be brought to our attention, but as far as we know such a statement is brought forth only as a means of unfairly sensationalizing a non-issue.

The prophet then married the young daughter, Hafsa, of his another great comrade, Umar who also married the four-year-old half sister of Ayesha (the posthumous daughter of Abu Bakr).

The Mother of the Believers Hafsa (Radhia Allahu Anha) was a widow of 22 years of age when she married the Prophet ﷺ. So there is no issue of him marrying a very young girl in this case.

In the case of 'Umar (Radhia Allahu Anhu), it is not authentically documented that he married Abu Bakr's (Radhia Allahu Anhu) young daughter. It seems to us that this is one of the claims brought forth by anti-Islamic sources, in cooperation with Twelver Shias- who have their own agendas to pursue in terms of how they view Umar (Radhia Allahu Anhu) and his marriages. We will not pursue this angle in here since it is not related, but it is important for us just to note what the source of different objections actually is.

Also, supposing that 'Umar (Radhia Allahu Anhu) did marry a young girl, what is the problem in this, as long as the rules of Islam have been followed and there has been no problems in how the marriage was conducted or what transpired after the marriage (in connection with marrying girls of this age)? If there is truly something that the reader believes to have been inappropriate, then this has to be brought forth, for otherwise we have the same situation of trying to sensationalize a non-issue.

Mohammad also made his adopted son to divorce his wife, Zainab, so he could marry her.

The above is concerning the marriage of Zainab bint Jahsh (Radhia Allahu Anha) and Zayd bin Harithah (Radhia Allahu Anhu), their subsequent divorce, and the Prophet's ﷺ marriage to Zainab. Basically the objection is that the Prophet ﷺ had fallen in love with Zainab and that this is what led to her divorce from Zaid and her marriage to the Prophet ﷺ.

With respect to the issues concerning this marriage, and specifically the allegation that the Prophet ﷺ had fallen in love, Shaykh Shabbir Ally responds as follows⁷:

If that were true it would not detract from the veracity of the prophet. Muslims admit that he was a human being. It is not unnatural for a man to fall in love. The fact that he is a prophet does not rob him of his natural human emotions. In fact it is true that he loved his wives.

However, it is not true that he fell in love with Zainab in the way that is claimed by some critics. They say that once the prophet visited Zaid, the husband of Zainab. Zaid was out at the time, and Zainab was combing her hair. The prophet was struck by her beauty and immediately left saying something to the effect that God changes the hearts of people. When Zaid learnt about this incident he offered the prophet that he would divorce Zainab in order that the prophet may marry her. Accordingly, he divorced her and the prophet married her.

⁷ [Tough Questions and Easy Answers](#), accessed on the 7th December 2012

Several things point to the lack of truth in this story. First, it is unlikely that the prophet (pbuh) was suddenly struck by Zainab's beauty. Zainab was his cousin. He had known her since childhood. Why would she suddenly appear striking after she was already married to another?

Second, the prophet had arranged for her to get married to Zaid. If there was to be an attraction why did the prophet (pbuh) not encourage her to marry none but himself?⁸

Third, the fact of the matter was that Zaid's marriage proved to be an unhappy one. Zaid was a former slave and as such was held in low esteem in the eyes of Zainab. He mentioned to the prophet that he intended to divorce his wife. But the prophet advised him to keep his wife and avoid divorce.

In the meantime, Zaid intended to divorce his wife, Allah intended to marry her to the prophet. Eventually Zaid could maintain his marriage no longer. He divorced Zainab and Allah declared in his Glorious Book that he has wedded her to the prophet after the proper waiting period was over.

This marriage served more than one purpose. First, the prophet was responsible for arranging Zainab's marriage to Zaid. In a sense, then, he was also indirectly responsible for the unhappiness she felt in her marriage. Her marriage to the prophet now provided her the honour she felt she deserved, and exonerated the prophet.

Second, Zaid had been adopted as the prophet's son. Eventually, however, the Qur'an prohibited the practice of changing the parental identity of adopted persons. Zaid, then, was to no longer be called "son of Muhammad" but rather "a close friend." The prophet's marriage to the divorced wife of Zaid was a practical demonstration that the adopted relationship was not equal to a real blood-relationship. A man cannot marry the divorced wife of his real son but he can marry the divorced wife of his adopted son.

The abolishment of the age-old practice was a positive improvement for the adopted persons. People outside of Islam still continue this practice for their own benefit. They adopt children and rob them of their real identify, making them believe they are real children of the household in which they grow up. When such

⁸ One issue not mentioned here which needs an answer is the possible objection that perhaps this alleged meeting was the first time that the Prophet ﷺ saw Zaynab (Radhia Allahu Anha) in "all her beauty" (that is, without the outer coverings Muslim women put on when outside their homes). The answer to this is that the Verses of Hijab (covering) were revealed at a relatively later time during the Prophet's ﷺ mission, so that prior to the revelation of such Verses, there would have been no regulations concerning how women should cover themselves, and there would have been numerous times prior to this alleged incident when Zaynab (Radhia Allahu Anha) would have been seen by the Prophet ﷺ without the Hijab covering. In fact, since a number of reputable commentaries place the Verses of Hijab around the exact time of the Prophet's ﷺ marriage with Zaynab (Radhia Allahu Anha), the issue of him seeing her "in all her beauty" while her beauty would be normally hidden from him does not even arise.

children realize the truth they suffer much disappointment and grief. The adoptive process continues for the selfish gain of the adoptive parents.

But is it not true that children sometimes need adoptive parents? Yes. But they also need to preserve their real identity. This is what Islam ensures. It is the responsibility of the entire community to help children in need. They should be taken in and nurtured but not confused with one's own children.

The prophet's marriage to Zainab was a bold measure to forever engrave in the minds of his followers that as much as people would resist change, some changes are worth the effort. Adoptive children should no longer be robbed of their real identities.

Much more can be said about this issue, but in synthesis one can say that this was totally about changing the prevailing opinions concerning how the issue of adoption should properly be viewed by the society at large, and the Prophet's ﷺ actions were a guide in this regard for all humanity.

To him a woman was property of a man which is the basic belief of Islam.

This is again, a misrepresentation of Islam. There is no book of Islamic laws which formally states that a woman is the property of anyone, neither her father, brother, or husband. To further extend this to say that this is a basic belief in Islam is a doubling of the misinformation.

In fact, the Qur'an provides very clear Verses where the old customs of people considering women as property were eliminated. This is why we read:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا يَجِلُّ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَرِثُوا النِّسَاءَ كَرِهًا

O ye who believe! It is not lawful for you forcibly to inherit the women (of your deceased kinsmen) (Quran 4:19)

Mufti Muhammad Shafi (RA) in his Ma'ariful Qur'an relates the condition of women prior to Islam in the following words:

...men used to act as owners of the life and property of women, so much so, that a woman taken in marriage was passed on as a piece of property after her husband's death, on to his heirs. They were considered as the new owners and inheritors of the property, plus the wife. They could, if they wished to, marry her or give her in marriage to somebody else against payment.

The son of the husband from another wife could himself marry her after the death of his father. When a living human being has been taken as an article of ownership, what would have happened to the normal property is all too obvious.⁹

He then mentions how the Qur'an stopped this matter by mentioning:

The Holy Qur'an struck at the very root of this evil which produced other injustices and openly declared:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَرِثُوا النِّسَاءَ كَرِهًا

O those who believe, it is not lawful for you that you should forcibly take women as inheritance.

...This is why the Shari'ah of Islam does not accept her approval in this matter as effective. If any woman, so out of her mind, approves of being owned by somebody, the Islamic law is not willing to concede this position.

The common method of preventing injustice and disorder would be to use a prohibitive order, but the Holy Qur'an has avoided this common method at this place and has expressed the element of prohibition by negating the lawfulness of this act by saying: لَا يَحِلُّ لَكُمْ 'it is not lawful for you'. Here, in addition to stressing upon the severe sinfulness of this matter, the purpose may also be to indicate that, should it be that someone does go on to marry an adult woman without her consent and permission, the marriage thus entered into shall not be lawful and, in fact, it is null and void. Being totally non-sequitur, no husband-wife relationship between the man and woman gets established from such a marriage, nor do the injunctions of inheritance or lineage follow from it.¹⁰

So from this small elucidation we know that the claim of women being the property of men is totally false and a calumny brought against the pure Islamic Shariah.

Mohammad was total illiterate which shows why there are so many grammatical errors in Quran. Why are the Muslims overlooking this fact?

This is one of the stranger claims that is brought up every now and then by the non-Muslims. The most we can imagine them doing was to apply the standards of Modern Standard Arabic onto the Qur'an, and say that whatever does not accord with the MSA (Modern Standard Arabic) pattern is wrong.

⁹ Ma'ariful Qur'an (English Translation). Vol.2, p.364

¹⁰ Ma'ariful Qur'an (English Translation). Vol.2, p.365

However, we say that this is totally incorrect, as the MSA is derived from Classical Arabic, and that which is based on a purer form of the language cannot be judged based on something that is of lower quality.

In addition, many of the exegesists of the Qur'an devote a large part of their volumes in order to discuss the grammatical aspects of the Quran, and these can be referred to by anyone who is honest and really wants to know the truth of the allegations leveled against the Qur'an in this respect. Answers also exist to some of the allegations brought against the sentence structure of some of the Qur'anic Verses, but since none of these charges were specifically brought forth in here, there is no need to discuss it in detail.

Also he was not accepted by other communities as prophet especially Jews which is why he wrote these lines against non-believers (those that did not believe him).

"Believers, take neither Jews nor Christians for your friends. They are friends with one another. Whoever of you seeks their friendship shall become one of their number. Allah does not guide the wrongdoers."
(5:49, Quran)

There are two issues that have to be addressed in here, the issue of not being accepted as a Prophet, and the issue of what the Qur'an says with respect to friendship with the non-Muslims.

With respect to not being accepted by other communities in his ﷺ time, this is not totally true, as most of the Arabian tribes converted to Islam during his very own lifetime. Also, if one sees the composition of Muslims around the world, one will see that all of them converted at some point in the past from a non-Muslim religion to Islam, such as Christianity (in North Africa, Syria, Turkey), Buddhism (Afghanistan, Indonesia), Hinduism (India, Bangladesh), and so on. So it cannot be said that he ﷺ was rejected by 'other communities' as people did enter the fold of Islam during his life as well as after him.

Also, if we compare this to the case of Sikhism, we see that Sikhism has had much less success than Islam in terms of attracting new followers. One may attribute this to the lack of a decisive effort to bring people to Sikhism, but whatever the reason may be, it is obvious that Islam has been and is much more active in the field of making its religion known to the world at large.

Concerning the Verse brought forth, it is actually from Verse number 51 (not 49) of Surah number 5 (al-Maidah). Concerning the meaning of this Verse, the Mufasirin (exegesists of the Qur'an) have said that this refers not to a prohibition

of cordiality in dealing with people, but rather it refers to intimate friendship. For example, in Ma'ariful Qur'an we read as an explanation to this Verse that:

Muslims can deal with non-Muslims in the spirit of tolerance, sympathy, goodwill, equity, justice, favour and kindness, almost everything within that line of conduct. In fact, they should do that for they have been taught to do that. But, what is not permitted is the kind of fast friendship and indiscriminating intimacy which may garble the distinctive hallmarks of Islam. This is the issue known as the 'Tark al-Muwalat' to refrain from deep (friendship) in Islamic terminology.¹¹

The above statements are based on the sayings of the Prophet ﷺ who said: "A person follows the Deen (way of life) of his close friend; therefore let each of you look carefully at whom he chooses for friends." [Tirmidhi]¹²

So this is definitely not a matter of being rude to the non-Muslims at every turn, but rather of not taking the non-Muslims as intimate friends, something which will make the Muslim in question possibly lose his identity and fall into the mannerisms of the disbelievers.

There is no way that "Guru Nanak" would follow such teachings. Muslims just want to attack Sikhism and misrepresent it.

If it is true that "Guru Nanak" did not follow the teachings of Islam (and there is no compelling reason for us to believe that he did), that was for his own loss and he will be given his due in the Afterlife. However, it is the proper way for every individual Sikh man or woman to critically study the beliefs of Islam, particularly the theological aspects of the Muslim faith, and then realize that there is no religion other than Islam that is to be followed.

With respect to our 'attacking Sikhism and misrepresenting it', there may be some truth in this, in that there may be Muslims who wish to portray things in a way other than they were, be it with respect to the founders of Sikhism or some other matters related to the religion. But this cannot be used as an excuse not to study the Islamic religion, or to dismiss the other serious and well-founded criticisms that we may level against the Sikh religion. Thus, if there is something which we say about Sikhism which is untrue, we have no problem in removing such a criticism from our writings and from our minds, but those criticisms which is definitely true have to be given proper consideration by our opponents.

¹¹ Ma'ariful Qur'an, Vol.3, p.187

¹² As translated in the article: "[Friendship With Non-Muslims: Explaining Verse 5:51](#)". The readers are encouraged to read the article in full to obtain a more complete understanding of how the Verse in question should be interpreted.

I challenge you that in spite of your Da'wah to you can't convert me or other Sikhs to Islam.

We do not take this as a challenge or a taunt to convert people to Islam, as we do not consider our absolute success or failure in terms of how many people have come into the fold of Islam. However, we and the Muslims in general carry on the injunction to give the message to the masses as it is stated in the Qur'an:

فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ الْبَلَاغُ وَعَلَيْنَا الْحِسَابُ

...thine is but conveyance (of the message). Ours the reckoning. (Qur'an 13:40)

So this is the mindset we are to follow. It will please us if more people come to Islam and sadden us if people do not come into the fold of Islam, but at the end of the day this is something related to Allah's Guidance, not to our efforts. So if we struggle all of our lives to do that which were commanded to carry out, we can achieve a greater peace of mind knowing that we did our efforts and that the results were whatever Allah willed.

Here we also want to say that if a non-Muslim wishes to remain as he is simply out of spite for the one who is giving him the message of Islam, then this clearly shows that he is not even thinking about Islam (or even his religion) in terms of truth versus falsehood, but he is rather taking the entire issue in a very emotional light, thinking about what might make another person feel slighted or hurt, and then acting accordingly. We would like to remind such people that the question at hand is of huge significance for their status in the life after death, and it cannot be reduced to a simple matter of trying to hurt someone's feelings by refusing the Islamic religion.

If the Muslim Da'ee (propagator) has been on this track for a long time and/or understands the true significance of his mission, in all likelihood he will not feel anything bad about the attempts of all the non-Muslims to shun away from his call, so even in this matter the non-Muslim would have failed. But we say that even if the non-Muslim does manage to hurt the feelings of the Muslim calling him to Islam, his victory is a very small one, as he has placed his pride above the truth, and this is a very lamentable situation to be in.

Being the fastest growing religion doesn't mean a thing, as it's about quality rather than quantity.

We do not claim that if Islam is the fastest growing religion in the world, then this means that the quality of its truth is undermined. The truth of Islam is the same, its principles and rules are the same, whether the whole world converts to the Islamic religion or whether all the people run away from it. For Allah the Exalted, there is no difference whether we worship Him or not, as worship is only

for our own benefit and the rewards and punishments (for not carrying out the rules of Islam) will only benefit or harm us.

As far as I am concerned, you can live in your Paradise with 72 Virgins and have fun with them.

This "72 Virgins" claim is brought but a lot nowadays, because our opponents think that it is incredulous for someone to have bodily enjoyments in Paradise. However, we Muslims believe Paradise to be a reward for the Muslims not only spiritually but also physically. Moreover, the term 'virgins' is not totally correct, as the term used in Islam for these beings is 'houris', which is a creation made by Allah that is purer than an earthly virgin- as we can imagine a number of bad things being done by virgins on this Earth, but the 'houris' are protected from even these lesser evils.

The gist of this allegation against us comes from Christians –who do not believe in bodily resurrection of the dead- and was later on tacked onto by Atheists – who do not believe in anything as an afterlife to begin with- as an easy way to try to scandalize the Muslims' beliefs. With respect to Hindus, Sikhs, and others, this is also something that does not fit in with their ideas of what happens in the Afterlife, so a number of them have decided to join in the bandwagon of ridiculing the Muslims based on this point.

The common denominator among all these groups is that they cannot see that Paradise is composed of both spiritual and physical pleasures, and they see this as an absolute impossibility. Our answer is that there is nothing really impossible in this respect, as we can imagine – in the mind's eye- a situation where Allah creates a place for those who believe in Him and struggle in His way which consists of pleasures for their souls as well as their resurrected bodies. There is nothing strange about this nor can the mind deny its possibility, and this is known without consulting the primary Islamic sources. When we do consult the Islamic sources, we find the mention of 'houris' is present, along with some descriptions of how the relationship will be between them and the Muslims who are resurrected in Paradise. Once we know this, then this passes from the realm of possibility to the realm of certainty, and it becomes an integral part of the Muslim belief.

Concerning the types of objection that may be raised against this concept, what is brought up from the Christian side is the presence in the Bible of a saying (attributed to Jesus) where he says that those who die in faith will become like angels, having no bodily needs. To this we say that the only sayings of 'Isa (Alayhi Salaam) that we are certain about are those that are included in the Qur'an and the rigorously authenticated Ahadith. What is mentioned in the Bible is not a proof for the Muslim. We also say that the Christian should leave making

an issue out of this matter, and instead study the theological basis of Islam and see how it is superior to Christianity.

With respect to Atheists, Sikhs, and any other religion who brings up this matter, we say that they are making themselves look weak by following the reasoning of a third-party simply for the sake of attacking Islam. And their position is obviously weak, since the Christian at least believes in spiritual resurrection, whereas the Atheist (for example) does not even believe in this, but is copying the objection from another source. And like the Christian, we respectfully but firmly encourage them to study the theology of Islam and ask their questions concerning these matters, and not about any secondary matter they may find objectionable at first.

Session #2:

Coming back to the matter of a Prophet, when Prophet Muhammad received revelations the angel Gabriel squeezed him and many in the Islamic world believe an angel cannot squeeze a person.

This is a very curious unreferenced statement. We would like to sincerely ask any person (Muslim or non-Muslim) to give us some scholarly reference for this claim, as it seems to have no relationship with Islamic belief as far as we know. If the Islamic references say that Jibril (alayhi Salaam) pressed the Prophet ﷺ then this is sufficient as an evidence for us that such was the case. If there is any scholar who has understood this matter in a different light, the reference has to be brought forward, for otherwise it is simply an unreferenced claim.

A book by Sami Zaatari called "False Prophet", who is a Muslim scholar, shows that even he does not believe Prophet Muhammad received revelations.

With respect to Sami Zaatari, we know him and we know his contribution to the field of Islamic propagation. Alhamdulillah he is good in this field, but he is not a scholar as per the Islamic definitions of a scholar or 'Aalim. Secondly, he has never said that Muhammad ﷺ did not ever receive revelations. Perhaps he was referring to a specific incident where the anti-Islamic propagandists were attributing a "wrong revelation" to the Prophet ﷺ and he was saying that such a "wrong revelation" did not occur. It is improper to say that rejection of this "wrong revelation" constitutes rejection of "revelation" as a whole (if indeed he ever did say such a thing). Thirdly, we do not know of any book by Sami Zaatari by the name of "False Prophet", so it would be good for you to refer us to any link where such a book is mentioned. Additionally, the title is obviously

something that would never be said by a Muslim about Muhammad ﷺ, but rather from a non-Muslim who has deep hatred for Islam.

The one who is in love with the word Prophet is astray, as in the end it does not bring any change. So ask yourself who is a Prophet? Does it not mean one prophecies and look for converts? But that's not the case even here; the word prophet is used because of geographical reasons like we have Jesus and Moses. But when you come to the Indian sub-continent the word Guru is used which means "brings light to the darkened world".

So the world itself proves the Guru is better than prophet and the one who brings light to the dark minds for he or she is ready to sacrifice to defend the Truth. That's why you find so many of My Sikh brothers and sisters became Martyrs for Truth while defending it.

There are different issues raised in here:

Concerning the usage of the word "Prophet", we Muslims believe that Muhammad ﷺ was not only a Prophet, but also was a Mercy to the Worlds and a Shining Light for all the world to be guided by his example. The Qur'an explicitly states this when it says:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ شَاهِدًا وَمُبَشِّرًا وَنَذِيرًا * وَدَاعِيًا إِلَى اللَّهِ بِإِذْنِهِ وَسِرَاجًا مُنِيرًا

O Prophet! Lo! We have sent thee as a witness and a bringer of good tidings and a warner. And as a summoner unto Allah by His permission, and as a lamp that giveth light. (Qur'an 33:45-46)

The Qur'an also says (referring to Muhammad ﷺ):

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

We sent thee not save as a mercy for the peoples. (Qur'an 21:107)

The Muslims do not stick to the dictionary definition and restrict Prophethood to "prophecies" about the future, but rather we say that the main purpose of the Prophets and Messengers is to deliver the Message they have been entrusted to deliver by Allah and to guide people to the truth by the will of Allah. They do give people news about what is come, but first and foremost their mission is to guide people and lead them to Allah the Exalted. Thus, even if the number of "prophecies" of a certain Prophet or Messenger were not particularly many, it cannot possibly detract from his very high position with Allah the Exalted, nor of the obligation of the people to follow him.

As for the Jews and Christians using the word "Prophet", their definition of what constitutes Prophethood is at odds with Islam in many places due to their manipulation of this term. So their definition and understanding of this term must be kept separate, and our understanding must also be kept separate, so that it is known that we do not agree on this issue with them in spite of the similarity of terms, and so that those who are looking at this matter from the outside also know that the issue of 'Prophethood' must not be muddled between ourselves on one hand and the Judeo-Christian perception on the other.

Coming to the issue of the 'Guru being ready to sacrifice himself for the truth' and the Prophets not doing so, we say that this cannot be a true description of the matter. If the 'Guru' brings a religion that is incorrect, there is no issue of 'truth' anymore and even if he is willing to die for his religion, what he has died for is an untruth, however sad that may be. Also, the true Prophets of Allah (Alayhima Salaam) were ready to sacrifice their lives, families, and properties for the sake of Allah the Exalted. This is mentioned in the Qur'an as follows:

وَكَايْنٍ مِّنْ نَّبِيٍّ قَاتَلَ مَعَهُ رِثِيونَ كَثِيرٍ فَمَا وَهَنُوا لِمَا أَصَابَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَمَا ضَعُفُوا وَمَا اسْتَكَانُوا ۗ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الصَّابِرِينَ

وَمَا كَانَ قَوْلُهُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ قَالُوا رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا ذُنُوبَنَا وَإِسْرَافَنَا فِي أَمْرِنَا وَثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَنَا وَانصُرْنَا عَلَى الْقَوْمِ الْكَافِرِينَ

فَاتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ تَوَابَ الدُّنْيَا وَحُسْنَ ثَوَابِ الْآخِرَةِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

How many of the prophets fought (in Allah's way), and with them (fought) Large bands of godly men? but they never lost heart if they met with disaster in Allah's way, nor did they weaken (in will) nor give in. And Allah Loves those who are firm and steadfast. All that they said was: "Our Lord! Forgive us our sins and anything We may have done that transgressed our duty: Establish our feet firmly, and help us against those that resist Faith." And Allah gave them a reward in this world, and the excellent reward of the Hereafter. For Allah Loveth those who do good. (Qur'an 3:146-148)

So it is not an issue concerning devotion to the religion, but whether the religion itself it correct to begin with.

This also extends beyond the 'Gurus' and Prophets to include their followers as well: That which is incorrect to begin with should not be defended, neither with one's words and thoughts nor with one's life and property. So it is wrong to simply eulogize those who died for a given religion, when the religion itself has flaws and cracks in it.

But in Islam you look to convert the whole world and you undermine beliefs of others and I am sure God does not like that because there is a lot of difference between the teachings of Sikhism and Islam.

Here we have to bring up one very important issue: If one believes that what they have is the absolute truth, there is no point in keeping it to one's self for the sake of 'harmony', 'communal peace', or fear of 'undermining the beliefs of others'. This is either a selfish attitude towards truth (thinking: 'I have the truth and do not want to share it others'), or it is a sign that the religion is not sure about its total truth.

When we deal with any two ideologies that make mutually exclusive and mutually contradictory claims concerning the truth of any given matter, it is obvious that at least one of them is false, if not both of them. If there can be some logical reconciliation between the two positions, this is another matter that has to be discussed separately. But when there is acknowledgment that what we are dealing with is mutually contradictory claims to the truth, but there is still a denial to show that the truth is one (and not mutually exclusive multiplicities) then we run into many problems, since it shows that the religion in question does not even take truth seriously, and is willing to tolerate wildly differing (and obviously incorrect) definitions of the Divine Being into its scope.

This is what Islam cannot and will not accept in this respect. If we are 'accused' of trying to convert the whole world to Islam, this is because the propagators of Islam were certain of its truth, and did not wish to see the non-Muslim world languish in false beliefs. This is why the Qur'an states:

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ

He it is Who hath sent His messenger with the guidance and the Religion of Truth, that He may cause it to prevail over all religion, however much the idolaters may be averse. (Qur'an 9:33)

So Islam is the 'Religion of Truth', and we cannot remain content at simply practicing it ourselves while keeping the world at large in darkness about what we have received from Allah the Exalted.

With respect to the statement that 'God does not like that' we should undermine the religious beliefs of others, as stated before, we have to say that the Divine decree for the members of the true religion to spread this faith all over the world is something that can be easily seen as appropriate and correct (even without giving too much thought to the matter). In the conflict between spreading the truth and undermining other religions, it is obvious that spreading the truth is given precedence even if 'harmony' is undermined...here we mean the harmony

that would be present if members of the true religion simply let others do what they wanted and did not present to them the truth. There would be more 'harmony' in this sense, but all sides would be losers at the end, when the final judgment from God would be forthcoming.

Though Sikhs do not believe in prophecies I say that the reason behind it is that the Gurus rejected the use of miracles and prophecies to win converts. They insisted that the message should speak for itself. Although Sikh history is filled with amazing miracles, they were not done for show purposes or to impress people. Sri Guru Granth Sahib is not a book of prophecies, it is a scripture that leads one to realization of God and inspires love.

As mentioned before, we object to the tying of a Prophet to "prophecies". We also need to point out that we understand the weakness in trying to present any alleged prophecies as the main point behind the Prophet or Messenger's truthfulness. We had written in another article that:

...It should be mentioned here that the Islamic position is that the truthfulness of a Messenger or Prophet of Allah does not rest on whether he made prophecies that come true at a later time. In fact, such criteria would render the Prophet or Messenger severely disabled in his ability to properly convey the message he has been given to mankind, since people in his own time would not pay any attention to him, or at most would half-heartedly listen to his prophecies and claim that they can only know the truth of his mission many centuries later. If such were the case, the main message brought forth by the Prophet or Messenger would never be known properly since the mass transmission of his sayings, actions, and any revealed book he may have brought would be non-existent, and it would be very easy –when the predictions or prophecies have been shown to be true- for any impostor to make up narrations concerning the Messenger's actions or even concoct "revelations" and attribute them to the Messenger or Prophet. On the contrary, Islam says that mankind should first know the rational explanations for the Existence of the Divine Being, followed by the proofs for the decisiveness of Muhammad's □ coming as the Messenger of Allah along with whatever he brought of revelations from Allah, his actions and his sayings.¹³

So this is something that has to be kept in mind whenever tackling this issue from an Islamic perspective.

Concerning the saying that Sikh history is filled with 'amazing miracles', we would say that this is impossible as per the Islamic definition of a miracle. This is so since a miracle is a supernatural act carried out by a Prophet or Messenger in order to prove to the world that he is a Prophet or Messenger. When the Sikh

¹³ [Prophecy: High-Rise Buildings in the Arabian Peninsula](#)

religion starts out by insisting vociferously that their leaders were not Prophets or Messengers, there is no way in which whatever amazing things were attributed to them could be termed as 'miracles'.

And the situation with any extraordinary thing that it brought forth at the hands of anyone is that the claims of that person have to be compared with the truth that is already known. In the case of Sikhism, since its claim is to be a new religion, we know its allegation to be untrue, as there can be no new religion after Islam, and this is something known through the sayings of Muhammad ﷺ. This is in addition to the fact that Sikhism presents a view of theology (a view of how the Divine Being is) which is inconsistent with reality, and this can only be a proof that what Sikhism says about everything else is incorrect.

At the same time, there is one very obvious prophecy in Sri Guru Granth Sahib that did indeed take place, which is the fall of Babar's Mughal Empire. While speaking out against the Mughal atrocities, "Guru Nanak" says the following:

Coming in seventy-eight (1521 A.D.), they will depart in ninety-seven (1540 A.D.), and then another disciple of man will rise up.

Nanak speaks the Word of Truth; he proclaims the Truth at this, the right time. || 2 || 3 || 5 ||

Humayun, Babar's successor was indeed driven out by Sher Shah in the year 1540AD. So as you can see, the Gurus did make a prophecy, but unlike other scriptures, Sri Guru Granth Sahib is solely a spiritual guide for the discovery of God.

The first thing we have to point out is regarding the authoritativeness of the translation, since the original was written in another language and in a style that is very different from what is common among the people today, meaning that there is wide scope for translating things differently. Indeed, we find another translation of the same passage as such:

Coming in seventy eight (Vikram), they (the Mughals) shall depart in ninety seven and then another disciple of brave Man shall arise.¹⁴

In this second translation, the dates are absent, so it is not known whether the years added in parenthesis have been added properly or with the intention of slanting the alleged Verse to agree with a certain historical matter.

¹⁴ <http://www.srigranth.org/servlet/gurbani.gurbani?Action=Page&Param=723&g=1&h=1&r=1&t=2&p=0&k=0>, accessed on 7th December 2012

Also, we doubt that such an interpretation would be totally correct, since the Mughal Empire did not fall in 1540 C.E., but rather survived well into the 19th century. Even Babar's successor was not driven out permanently in 1540 C.E., but rather was able to come back to recapture his lost land and expand his Empire some years later. If we follow the strict outward words of this passage, we would say that such a prophecy is wrong, since the dynasty that is dislocated temporarily and comes back has not departed at all. So this could be a case of interpreting a certain passage too eagerly in order to show that a prophecy did occur.

Additionally, even if such a 'prophecy' was indeed true, Islam does not say that "prophecies" (or more specifically, information about future events) are reserved only for true Prophets and Messengers of Allah. Also, it is possible for even a non-Muslim to say things about the future that may come to be true. But we say – as always- that the true criteria for examining the religion's veracity is to study its teachings, independent of what it may say about future events- of course, we do hold that the true religion will only inform about future events truthfully, but the converse is not necessarily the case. It is our firm belief that the objective reader will see that Islam is the only true religion while other religions – even if they have thousands of 'prophecies' that came true- cannot stand on par with Islam in this respect.

Now, "Guru Nanak" Sahib is SATGURU which means the one who has meditated in the court of God and I think it is common sense to know that the court of God is higher than Heaven and Hell in all Semitic scriptures.

What is being said in here is that "Guru Nanak" sat in the presence of God, who gave him the command to preach this new way. The analogy is being made that there is no way that – for example- Muhammad ﷺ can compare to this, since his mission was restricted to receiving revelations from another being (Angel Jibril (Alayhi Salaam)), and that this is much lower than receiving the revelations from God Himself.

To the specific question of how revelations were received, we say that the Prophet ﷺ did not always receive the revelations through Jibril (Alayhi Salaam). In Islam, we know that there is the recited revelation (which is the Qur'an) and the non-recited revelation, and in most cases the non-recited revelation came directly to the Prophet ﷺ without the need for any angel. Even in the case of the Qur'an, this did not come to him all the time through the agency of Jibril (Alayhi Salaam), but there were times when he received the Qur'anic directly from Allah the Exalted.

Moreover, we know that the Prophet ﷺ met his Lord – in addition to travelling to Paradise- during the event of al-Isra' wal-Mi'raj (Night Journey and Ascension) and this is an integral part of the Muslim belief, so it is incorrect to say that the Prophet ﷺ only received revelations from an angel and never was in the "presence" of Allah (here we put presence in quotes so that people will not think that there was a physical meeting or that there was a distance between Allah and the Prophet ﷺ, which is a claim strongly rejected in Islam).

Coming back to the supposed meditation of "Guru Nanak" in the presence of God, we say that this implies that all the knowledge "Guru Nanak" must have had about every religion must have been correct. This is obvious, because if the origin of the knowledge is God Himself, there cannot be any misinformation on the part of the one He has chosen.

But as we saw before, it was claimed ardently that "Guru Nanak" went to Makkah in order to show the Muslims that God "does not reside only in the West". For any person to make this statement is amazingly incorrect, and shows that the person in question has not gained enough knowledge about Islam. Indeed in the case of Islam it is even more surprising, considering that by that time its scholars had developed an extremely developed collection of tracts and works detailing what the Islamic position with respect to Allah's Attributes, and not a single one made a mention of Allah residing in the West. Perhaps it was "Guru Nanak's" simplistic understanding of what Baytu Allah (House of Allah) meant in the doctrine of the Muslims, but whatever the case may have been, this was a gross error in perceiving the Muslim position.

In addition to this, we see the Sikhs presenting this trip in the following terms: *"His visit to the Mecca is only required by us to learn that God whom they, the Moslems, say is in Kaaba is everywhere."*¹⁵

We object to this statement from another angle: Even if the only statement made by "Guru Nanak" and Sikhs in general was that 'God is everywhere', this would still be a very big flaw in their theology, for Allah is not in a location, but rather exists without a location. If it is said that this is a metaphorical statement, we would reply that the purport of the stories surrounding "Guru Nanak's" alleged visit to Makkah are all basically the same, that of denying one physical location for God (the Ka'bah) and replacing this with all locations.

And our resolute position in this matter is that whoever says that Allah is literally in one location, in many locations, or in all locations has held onto an unforgivable flaw in his understanding of the Divine Being, since he is mixing the

¹⁵ http://www.sikhiwiki.org/index.php/Guru_Nanak_in_Mecca#At_Mecca

creation with the Created, and basically saying that 'God' is just another being in need of specification from a Creator.

In addition to this, there are other evidences of "Guru Nanak's" lack of knowledge concerning Islam. For example, we read in the topic concerning the Hajjis discussion with "Guru Nanak" that he said:

Nanak said, O: Rukn-ud-Din, it is written in the Book (i.e., the Quran) that those who drink wine or 'Bhang' shall be punished on the Day of Judgement.¹⁶

If the meaning of this supposed saying of Guru Nank was meant to be taken literally (and there is no reason for us to believe otherwise), then this is another mistaken attribution to Islam. The only Verse in the Qur'an which mentions the actual prohibition of drinking does not mention punishment in the Day of Judgment as a corollary for those who commit this sin. While it is obvious that there will be a punishment for those who do this act if they do not repent and ask for Allah's forgiveness, to say that the Qur'an mentions this literally shows that the claimant has never studied the Qur'an, nor has he gained knowledge of what is in the Qur'an from other sources (such as the Divine source which the Sikhs claim).

We could give more examples in this respect, but the following will be enough for the time being. At a later stage we will revisit this issue (of how Sikhism has not carefully considered the truths of the Divine Being's Attributes or of the Islamic religion), but the above should be sufficient for our readers.

It is only common sense that the court of God is Higher, which is something described in our Scripture known as "Realm of Truth". But the Qur'an and the Bible are stuck in the same corner and in the same boat and even the "court of God" is not described...Does the Quran describe this?

When the Sikh talks about the "court of God" or the "Realm of Truth", he means that this is the final stage of spiritual progress of man according to his religion. A small description is given below:

The final stage of spiritual ascent, i.e. sach khand (the realm of the Truth), defies description. "Hard as steel is the story of this state to narrate." Described as the abode of the Nirankar, the Formless One, sach khand is not a geographical spot, but the final state of the evolution of human consciousness. One can only experience it, but not describe it, for here words cease to have any meaning and no analogies can help in describing the Unique. Here in the Divine Court, the perfect ones rejoice in His presence. It is from here that His Will

¹⁶ http://www.sikhiwiki.org/index.php/Guru_Nanak_in_Mecca#At_Mecca

*(hukam) goes out to the universe, and the liberated, grace-filled souls perform it joyously and effortlessly. The devotee becomes one with Him and realizes Him as a unifying force working through all objects of His creation. This way he attains to the non-spatial sach khand and to the Dweller therein, the Nirankar, who is nowhere outside his own heart.*¹⁷

So the Sikh is saying that this is much higher than the Jannah or Paradise promised to the Muslims, since this is merely a place of spiritual and physical enjoyments for the Muslim believer after he has passed away. He also brings in the Bible, but we do not wish to mention much about this, except to say that we and the Jews/Christians are different religions and must be treated as such.

Concerning this "Realm of Truth", any and all Muslim scholars will say that the way such a place has been described is totally against the Absolute Distinction of Allah from His Creation. This is obvious, since the claim is made by the Sikh that those who follow the principles of Sikhism will eventually reach this stage, where all dimensional limitations are stopped and they become one with God. Note that in here the passages indicate an actual, literal unity with God, and not a metaphorical "unity" that is not connected to the essence of the human and the essence of God.

So in the pronouncements of the Sikhs, we see their saying that the human being – which is a limited being subject to specification from something other than itself- becomes the formless, dimensionless Creator. So the distinction between the creation and the Creator is totally muddled. One should ask himself: *How can it be said that a being which is intrinsically possible in existence became intrinsically necessary in existence?* This is obviously something not possible in itself, since that which is possible in existence needs a necessary being (God) to bring it into existence. Since the helplessness of the former being is known, this is an intrinsic quality for it, and it cannot at any stage change and become the being upon which everything else depends.

In fact, if we only concentrate on the facet of its changing from one spiritual stage to another higher spiritual stage, we would know the claims of the Sikhs to be false. This is because any change that occurs for such a being is brought upon by the Power and Will of God, and is totally dependent on Him to become reality. In effect the Sikh is saying that a being which changes can also become God, while we know (and even the Sikhs will admit) that God is changeless, and that which changes can never attain Godhood, and can never attain any of the actual Divine qualities or attributes (such as formlessness, beginninglessness, etc).

¹⁷ http://www.sikhiwiki.org/index.php/Five_khands

If we wanted to relate this to the world of mathematics (just for the sake of providing an imperfect analogy), it is like saying that if we add enough numbers one after the other, we will eventually reach infinity, and that we have not reached this "blissful state" only because we are not striving hard enough. Just as anyone can see the fallacy at work in this case, so the previous fallacy should also be obvious for all to see.

So we Muslims say such thoughts (of a human being able to enter into complete literal unity with God) are outright blasphemy and nothing else. The Qur'an never says anything like this, since there is no contradiction between the beliefs of Islam and the sound mind. We say that the human being is a creation of Allah, and that this is what he always remains, even if he did his utmost struggle and due to this entered eternal bliss in Paradise. We are of the firm conviction that even this "eternal bliss" is not a cancelation of the dimensional aspect of time for the human being, but rather a reaffirmation of Allah being absolutely distinct from His Creation, as "eternity" in here means that Allah creates time and time (or change after change) within the realm of the human being's senses, and these periods of times or changes continue without end. In this way, the human being remains as he always was, totally under the control of Allah the Exalted, while Allah remains as He always is, distinct from His Creation.

In fact, the Sikh philosophy in this respect is very close to that of Hinduism or Buddhism, who believe that the souls or beings which attain spiritual perfection literally become one with the "Absolute Truth"- whatever each religion or sect may call this, or whether certain sects believe that we are already one with the Divine but that only the 'veil of ignorance' should be lifted. And it has shades of other religions in it also, such as Christianity, where certain sects believe in the possibility of actual union between man and God in a "theosis"- or at the very least, where they believe that man and God coexisted in Jesus, or any other similar beliefs.

If it is said that we have totally overlooked the fact that this non-spatial "unity" is nowhere outside of one's heart (but that this needs deep spiritual development), we say that the most that one can attain in this regard is complete satisfaction and complete sweetness of being the servant of Allah and in performing acts of worship for His sake. But this is definitely not "unity" with God in the "Formless Realm", but rather the utmost verification that we are the created slaves of God, and that we are totally distinct from God in our essence and characteristics. Thus, this state of spiritual ecstasy would be the confirmation of just how exalted God is and how needy of Him we are, rather than the realization of "unity".

So this is one of the most serious flaws in Sikhism: while professing monotheism and the belief in one God, they also say that we have the potential of becoming totally united with God in the literal meaning of the word. We Muslims say that

such a claim is unfounded, and a total misunderstanding of the nature of God and His Creation.

The Quran only describes 6 stages of creation. Does the Quran say that there are millions and millions of planet and galaxies? Ours in the only scripture in the world which says that there are millions of planets and galaxies. Your Quran only says that there are 7 heaven and Hells. Sahib Sri Guru Granth Sahib ji Maharaj even goes beyond that.

The above claim is not really related to the theological aspect of Sikhism, but it is noteworthy since it seems to say that the Sikh holy book is more advanced than the Qur'an is describing the reality of the Universe, and that it is closer to science in this respect. If this is what is meant, we say that it is not correct to judge the truth of a religious text by what is understood by scientists in any given era, as it is possible that their understanding of the Earth and the Universe may change considerably, or that they may use radically different terminologies and paradigms to describe the world in the future than what is currently used. So such attempts to draw similitude between science and the Qur'an (for example), should not be used in the opinion of many proper traditional scholars.

It could also be that this comparison is brought up in order to show that the "God of Sikhism" creates more than the "God of Islam". If this is the case, then the comparison stems from a flawed understanding of God. This is because some minds think that only if God is associated with more creations, then He will be more perfect. This is totally unsound since God is not in need of creation, nor is He in need to create a greater or a lesser number of creations for Him to be as perfect as He always was.

With respect to the "7 heavens and 7 hells" and that this is all that is mentioned in the Qur'an by way of mentioning what Allah has created, we say first that the Qur'an is not the only primary source of Islamic knowledge (this should be obvious by now, but we need to reiterate it in case it has not been noticed). Moreover, the 7 heavens and the 7 (levels of) Hellfire are something beyond the observable Universe, so it cannot be talking about that which the human can perceive with his normal senses. We also say that there are different narrations concerning what Allah has created, and some of them talk about great distances that are beyond what is normally comprehensible. For example, while mentioning the Prophet's ﷺ Night Journey and Ascension, it is narrated in the description that:

The Prophet saw the Throne (^Arsh), which is the ceiling of Paradise. The Throne is the largest creation of Allah in size; Allah did not create anything bigger in size than it. The seven heavens and the earth in comparison to the Kursiyy, are like a ring thrown in a desert, and the Kursiyy in comparison to the

Throne, is like a ring thrown in a desert. The seven heavens and the earth in comparison to the Throne are like a seed of mustard compared to the ocean. Allah created the Throne as a sign of His Power and He did not create the Throne to sit on it.

Allah created the Throne to show His Power. It is carried by four angels, and on the Day of Judgment, it will be carried by eight. The Prophet said he was permitted to speak about one of these angels who carry the Throne. In describing this angel, the Prophet told us the distance between his ear lobe and shoulder is the distance a fast-flying bird would cover in 700 years.¹⁸

There are many other narrations of a similar nature, and we will not get into the authenticity of each one, but it is important for everyone to realize that the Prophet ﷺ was given knowledge of a vast array of things concerning this world, the Universe, Paradise and Hellfire. Some of it was related to us and some of it was not, but even from the little which has been narrated to us, we know that the vastness of Allah's Creation is something that cannot be easily imagined by the human beings even today.

Another matter about a 'Prophet', why is Angel Gabriel used to send to reveal revelations, especially when angels are considered as part of Satan?

This is a false claim. The Qur'an states as a rule that angels are obedient servants of Allah, who never disobey their Lord. The Qur'an says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا قُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ عَلَيْهَا مَلَائِكَةٌ غِلَظٌ شِدَادٌ لَا يَعْصُونَ اللَّهَ مَا أَمَرَهُمْ وَيَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ

O ye who believe! Ward off from yourselves and your families a Fire whereof the fuel is men and stones, over which are set angels strong, severe, who resist not Allah in that which He commandeth them, but do that which they are commanded. (Qur'an 66:6)

So from this we know that angels do what they are commanded and they are created in such a way that they do not have the will or choice to disobey whatever Allah orders them to do.

With respect to Satan (Shaytan), a number of our scholars say that he was created in the form of an angel but with the inner characteristics of a Jinn (another creation of Allah which has the ability to do both good and bad deeds), which is why he disobeyed Allah. Other Muslim scholars have said that he was totally a Jinn, and that the Qur'anic Verses which seem to indicate otherwise can

¹⁸ http://www.sunna.info/Lessons/islam_365.html

be harmonized with this second opinion. Whatever the case may be, as a general rule, an angel is never considered to be a "part of Satan" since such is not the teaching of Islam, and whoever holds on to such a thought should remove this from their minds and learn what Islam really says about this issue.

"Guru Nanak" travelled the entire world to spread the Divine Naam, the Truth of God. He also went to Hindu religious centres to free people from superstition. "Guru Nanak" Sahib went to Nepal and up to this day people there refer to him as "GURU GOMPKA MAHARAJ". Sache Patch travelled to Uganda where people in tribes said that "A Holy Man came from the East" and saved the lives of people by issuing them water in a desert.

Sache Patch travelled to Mecca after making all these journeys beforehand, so you can also say that Sache Patch is Buddhist or Hindu. Sache Patch is the leader of Humanity and so he could not be categorised as a Muslim because WAHEGURU (GOD) gave him the Hukam which means the order to spread the message of Truth. Moreover, he travelled barefoot. Did your prophet ever do that? He just had a hard time migrating from Medina to Mecca? Is that all he could do?

Traveling a lot does not in itself mean that one is divinely protected, or that he has been chosen by God to spread a message. It all goes back to the correctness of the message being preached. If the message is correct then the travelling that is carried will be rewarded, but if the message is not correct – like for those who say that people can reach an actual, literal union with God- then the travelling itself will not make the person rise in ranks or degrees of spiritual closeness to God. Whether this travelling is done barefoot, or over hot charcoal, or while arrows are being fired onto one's body will not change this basic fact about the truth of the message being paramount before any effort is done to spread it.

This is one point. We also need to stress that to travel more or less is not a condition through which the greatness of even a true Prophet is known, as each true Prophet may get a different series of instructions from His Lord concerning how the message should be spread. For some it may be to spread the message to a larger contingent of people, and for some it might be for a lesser number of people. Some may be ordered to migrate and others may be ordered not to do so. Some Prophets may be martyred in the sake of Allah and some may die natural deaths. None of these things should lessen our view of the true Prophets in our eyes, since they merely carried out whatever Allah ordered them to do, and they were not responsible beyond their capabilities.

This also applies to other related matter- such as whether the Prophet ﷺ travelled barefoot or whether he had a tough time migrating from Makkah to

Madinah, or any other similar objection- since his ﷺ mission is set by Allah, and if Allah does not inform him to travel barefoot or to travel the entire world, Allah did not will for this to be the mode of propagation for his Prophet ﷺ, and there is no blame on him for this.

So you can keep proclaiming that the Quran is the Word of God; there are more 1000 verses which permit killings of non-Muslims. Also, the verse which says do not make friends with unbelievers but only make friends with believers otherwise you will have the wrath of Allah.

The matter regarding who the Muslims can take as "friends" has been discussed above. About "killing the non-Muslims", we would like to know the list of the "1000" Verses which specifically mention "killing non-Muslims", so that we can have a discussion about every single one of them if possible. Whatever Verses may be presented, our jurists and exegesists know well that the injunction for fighting in the cause of Allah has a set of rules which have to be observed before, during, and after military engagements. If these are not followed, then the responsible parties may be put to punishment by Allah the Exalted for having disobeyed His commandment and stipulations. And this is when we are talking about a just war that is taking place, which has its own restrictions as to when it can be carried. Concerning killing non-Muslims outside of these situations, then this is something generally not allowed, and the Islamic laws are extremely clear in this respect.

Perhaps the non-Muslim was referring to certain oft-repeated arguments from the anti-Islamic interlocutors, such as the phrase in Surah at-Tawbah, Verse 5 which says: "slay the polytheists wherever you find them". With respect to this Verse our position is that:

As mentioned by scholars of Qur'anic exegesis (tafsir), these verses were revealed specifically with regards to particular groups of polytheists that breached their peace treaties with the Muslim polity. This is clear in the very first verse, as it mentions that the proclamation is given out specifically to "those polytheists with whom you had made covenants."

Imam Razi, Imam Jamal, and others clarify in their tafsirs that this proclamation of fighting the polytheists "applies only to those that broke their covenants." This is also why an exception to the proclamation is made in verse 4 which, as Imam Razi and others clarify, refers to "those who did not break their covenants," i.e., they were not to be fought.

Hence, the oft-misunderstood fifth verse of "killing the polytheists wherever you find them" refers only to those that previously broke their covenants and, moreover, after they had four months to reflect on the situation and decide if they

*wanted to continue with their violation or not. If they decided to continue with their violation, then they would effectively be re-declaring war on the Muslim polity, in which case the verse ordered the polity to defend itself against the transgression.*¹⁹

So we see what the reality behind this Verse is, and that it is not considered at all to be a license for the Muslims to kill whoever he wants from among the non-Muslims, as fighting and killing are restrained to certain times and conditions.

As hinted by our non-Muslim opponent, there are allegedly one thousand Verses in the Qur'an which call for the killing of disbelievers. We reiterate our invitation for each one of them to be presented, so that we can provide our explanation of each one and put to ease the minds of those who wish to know the truth about Islam.

So there is no way that Islam can be compared with Sikhism. Is there not the following Hadith from Muhammad where it is mentioned: "Ali reported that the apostle of Allah said" There's a place in paradise where there will be a market; there will be no buying or selling of goods, but it will consist only of men and women. When a man desires a beauty he will have intercourse with them" (Al Hadiths Vol.4, p.172, No.34)

On the basis of this narration, how can the Islamic Paradise be anything other than a place for the satisfaction of carnal desires?

With respect to the narration presented, the reference given is totally wrong from what we can tell, since there is no Hadith book named simply "Al Hadiths".

What we do have is one narration in the Musnad of Imam Ahmad where something similar is mentioned, as part of a longer narration (it is also found as a standalone narration, but the chain is the same in both cases). And this narration has a weak chain according to the authentication of Shaykh Shayb al-Arnaut²⁰, so it cannot be used to prove this matter without another supporting evidence to back it up.

But as we have mentioned previously, it is true that there will be 'houris', a special creation made by Allah for those who enter Paradise, and those who enter Paradise will be wedded to these 'houris', and will have the same type of spiritual and physical enjoyments that they would have with the wives on Earth, only on a much grander scale than anything we can imagine on Earth.

¹⁹ From the article: [Slay the Polytheists Wherever you Find them; The Need for Recourse to Sound Scholarship](#)

²⁰ Musnad Imam Ahmad (with the authentication of Shaykh al-Arnaut), Vol.3, p.104, (Hadith number 1342).

We had already answered the doubt concerning the possibility of the inhabitants of Paradise having a chance to enjoy things from a physical angle. To this we have to add that the innate good or bad of an action done by the creation only depends on the judgment of Allah tied to this action. Since Allah has decreed that a man having a wife (or many wives) in Paradise is something that is acceptable and allowed from among the totality of pleasures in there, then this means all the actions associated with a 'Wife in Paradise' have been decreed to be morally good.

The only way our non-Muslim opponent's could have really criticized this matter is if they could show that 'Heavenly physical pleasures in Paradise, including spousal relations' is not connected to Allah's Power (that is, it was something intrinsically impossible, like a human soul actually merging with Allah). But it is obvious that such a thing is definitely connected to Allah's Power, and there is no inhibition that Allah creates a Paradise where those who enter from among the inhabitants of the Earth are able to wed wives who are a special creation of the Heavens which are made for them. This has been mentioned before by us, but since the matter was brought up again, we felt the need to elucidate this issue one more time.

Sticking to this point, the idea of 72 virgins matches with the Quran from all sides. That is why you find so many Muslims blowing themselves up and killing innocent people. The idea given by your prophet leads to that: If they kill themselves they will go to paradise and this is the main reason they do it. I have never seen prophet like this before!!!

The issue of what a true fighter in the way of Allah the Exalted receives for his struggle after dying to uphold and spread the religion of Islam is one thing, and killing random people is quite another. Nowhere in Islam is there a categorical statement that "If they kill themselves they will go to Paradise", and such a statement will not be found in any of the words of the Prophet ﷺ or the scholars of this Muslim nation. We had dealt with this matter briefly when discussing the interpretation of Surah at-Tawbah, Verse 5 (Qur'an 9:5), and there are a number of other works for those who want to know more about this very important issue, such as:

Islamic Stance on the London Bombings by Mufti Muhammad ibn Adam

Defending the Transgressed by Censuring the Reckless Against the Killing of Civilians by Shaykh Muhammad Afifi al-Akiti

Pakistani clerics explain Jihad from Mufti Rafi Usmani and other Muftis²¹

The above works and answers should be enough for the sincere reader to understand what the true Islamic ruling on Jihad is, and how it differs from the killing of civilians. If any reader still has objections after this, they can bring their objections to the forefront, but it should be noted that our position will have already been explained with the links provided above.

And what about the following Verse?

"The truth is from your Lord": Let him who will believe, and let him who will, reject (it): for the wrong-doers We have prepared a Fire whose (smoke and flames), like the walls and roof of a tent, will hem them in: if they implore relief they will be granted water like melted brass, that will scald their faces, how dreadful the drink! How uncomfortable a couch to recline on!

Who are the wrong doers here? None other than the people who do not follow Islam. So Muhammad here continues with Islamic hell in the form of revelation.

Before we move on, we have to say that it seems the arguments from this particular non-Muslim side have taken a turn towards attacking anything related to Islam, without paying much attention to continuity. This is fine by us since these arguments do need to be addressed, but the reader may find it confusing at times.

Concerning the Verse presented, it seems to be a close translation to a Verse found in Surah al-Kahf (Chapter 18). The non-Muslim is amazed that people would be sent to the "Islamic Hell" merely for not accepting Islam. There are a number of non-Muslims who think like this, and who believe that (for example) if the person does not accept the truth, the biggest punishment that should be reserved for that person should be death, or rebirth in order to have another chance to gain access to the truth and salvation.

Pertaining to the punishment of Hellfire for the disbelievers in general, this punishment is for those who hear the true message of Islam and out of stubbornness, arrogance, or disinterest refuse to submit to it. It does not apply to those who have never heard about Islam, or those who may hear a distorted message of Islam²², as the case for these types of people rests with Allah alone,

²¹ All three articles accessed on the 9th of March 2013

²² It has been said that those who hear even a distorted picture of Islam are obliged to use this initial opening and investigate for themselves what the truth of this distorted picture is, something which will ultimately lead them to the true picture of Islam based on which they will have to make their choice. We have to mention that while there are many false reports about Islam, there are other reports about Islam which are in essence true, but they may be rejected out of hand

and He is the One who best knows the final destination of every human being. In addition, there is nothing (in the realm of rationality) prohibiting Allah from punishing whoever He wills through whichever means He wills, since He is the Master Judge and Decider, and He makes His decisions free from any needs and wants. When we know through revelation that the Fire of Hell is the punishment for those who disobey Him, then there is no way for us to deny this, or to say that such a thing is impossible.

Just as in the case with the 'houris' for those who enter Paradise, what is being claimed by the non-Muslim is that the existence of Hellfire and the people's eternal entrance therein is not connected to Allah's Power (that is, it is something intrinsically impossible). Since they know that such is not the case (that is, they know there is a rational possibility for Hellfire to exist and of people who disobey Allah to enter it, and that this is known even without referring to any scripture), then such an objection, and other similar types of objections should be dropped until the theology of the different religions are studied, and then based on this matter can the proper decision be made about the identity of the true religion.

The kind of Allah described in your Qur'an is nothing but self-centered, saying 'My Way or the Highway.' The God I believe in, is known as the All-Knowing, All-Pervading Waheguru which does not look to convert but spreads the message of peace to humanity. Here is the relevant Verse:

"See the brother of humanity as pure. Conquer the mind. You conquer the world" (Ang 29)

The above comment had been dealt with before, but it has come up again and thus has to be commented on again: The matter of what is the "only correct path" and whether it should be followed is of importance and cannot be overlooked. It can be seen by simple reasoning that if a religion claims to be the only truth, it is either right or it is wrong in its claim, but not both. We believe that Islam is the correct religion, and all other religions and ways of life are incorrect and misleading. This is not due to us trying to belittle other religions, but due to the fact that truth cannot contain within itself self-contradictory statements.

Likewise, if a religion says that "there are many paths to God" then it has to account for the fact that the different religions are in many cases making

by the common non-Muslim due to his/her familiarity with a different lifestyle. The example that comes to mind is the permissibility of polygyny or the prohibition of homosexuality, which are very well-established Islamic positions, but which may cause a large chunk of humanity to reject Islam right away. In such cases the non-Muslim has heard the true position of Islam concerning the matter at hand, and he has rejected the religion as a whole based on these positions. In such a case he is responsible in the sight of Allah on the Day of Resurrection.

contradictory and mutually exclusive claims, in a way that cannot make the statement "there are many paths to God" be a true statement. Perhaps if one says that "there are many paths to God" and does not care about the correctness of the individual path he may take, then this statement may hold some weight, but it is intellectually dishonest to claim that all the religious paths are correct and lead to a good destination when these paths make statements that show clear disjunction and mutual contradiction with each other. There clearly is room for interpretation and explanations, but at some point the particularity of one religion's claims and how they sharply contrast²³ with the specific claims of another religion will be impossible to ignore, and the person will have to choose either one or the other as being the absolute truth.

The "conversion" angle is only the practical implementation of this principle, and it cannot be denied by anyone that the religion which is universalistic (it accepts members regardless of race or country of origin), and claims to have the absolute truth will look for converts, rather than waiting for people to find it, since the issue of 'salvation' is too great to simply let millions upon millions of people die without the message having reached them. In the specific case of Islam, there are scriptural reasons in addition to the logical ones mentioned above, but we have presented these already beforehand and there is no reason to reiterate them.

About the claim to "self-centeredness", we say that Allah has decreed that as far as humans are concerned, His obedience leads to happiness and bliss and that His disobedience leads to perdition and suffering. And He has created humans in such a way that they seek happiness and they turn and run away from suffering. So it is a combination of these two matters put together which leads the human being to seek out the way in which to achieve inner happiness and bliss for themselves. But as far as Allah is concerned, it makes no difference to Him whether the entire world obeys Him or disobeys Him, as He has no need for anyone's worship. Additionally, there are creatures He has created (such as the angels) who worship Him continuously and do not even have the ability to choose disobedience, yet they do not receive any 'reward' like the human beings will receive when they enter Paradise. (But we cannot say that the angels receive no reward at all, since the spiritual sweetness of worshipping Allah is a tremendous reward in and of itself and is beyond the bodily enjoyments of Paradise. What the Muslim says is that Allah, out of His Mercy and Generosity, has destined bodily and spiritual rewards in the Afterlife for those humans who submit and follow His religion in this world)

So it is merely Allah's Will to create a Heaven and Hellfire, and to tie one of them to His obedience and the other one to His disobedience- for the human beings.

²³ Not just sharply in a "literally poetic" way, but with the meaning of true rational impossibility of it being correct along with the claim of another religion.

Had He willed for it to be something else then it would have been so, but there is no use to engage in hypothetical visualizations of what the matters could have been 'had Allah willed something else', since such matters only lead to weakness and loss of faith in what is known to be certain.

Session #3:

The information in your website says that our founder is a false prophet then let me put this way we respect our faith as much as you do yours, and there should be no disparity between the two. So how would you feel if someone lays such an allegation on your Prophet by saying that he is a false Prophet?

About the allegation of Muhammad ﷺ being a false Prophet, this claim does make us feel upset, but such a statement is made by each and every non-Muslim either openly or discreetly (may Allah save us from ever holding such an opinion). And the proof of this is that the non-Muslims who decide not to become Muslim are saying that there is a flaw in the message of Muhammad ﷺ and that what he preached was incorrect. Since God is not the source of flawed and incorrect messages, then definitely the blame is being laid on the person of Muhammad (Salla Alalhu Alayhi wa Sallam) according to the non-Muslim view. Even if the person is an Atheist or does not believe in organized religion, he is still claiming that Muhammad ﷺ was a false Prophet, since he is claiming that our religion is fabricated based on previously untrue information, and it is known that there is no practical difference between saying that Muhammad ﷺ made up things from himself about a God that exists, or that he made up something based on other false things. So both groups of non-Muslims are claiming 'false Prophethood' on Muhammad ﷺ, with only a few details being different between each of the groups.

However, this cannot be used to say that there should be no disparity between Islam and other religions. We are not attacking "Guru Nanak" as a form of personal vendetta, but only to show the rational and historical deficiencies²⁴ in the Sikh religion; if such weaknesses can be shown without attacking the person of "Guru Nanak" then we will adopt that position without hesitation.

Regarding the word Prophet, as you have said Prophet Muhammad is for all humanity only in terms of converting people or just bring them back in brotherhood of Islam nothing else.

²⁴ By historical deficiencies we mean those sayings attributes to the major Sikh founders which contradict what is definitively known about Islam. We will try to stay away from other possible "historical deficiencies" since our core objective revolves around Islam, not around science, other religions, or other historical occurrences.

As we have mentioned previously, Muhammad ﷺ was a mercy for the entire world. He showed kindness and mercy to those who followed him as well as those who had not become Muslims. In the Islamic religion itself, there is nothing prohibiting the Muslims from showing kindness and civility towards non-Muslims, and this has been previously discussed.

But as we had also mentioned before, there is no greater task for a Prophet or Messenger of Allah than to bring the people he has been sent to the correct path, and to guide them from the darkneses of disbelief to the light of belief. There is no amount of civility or kindness which can take the place of this most important task, and to claim otherwise does no favors either to one's self or to the religion the person claims to follow. This is why the Muslims have always stated that the most important task of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and his followers is to spread the message to the entire world, and to never tire from doing this task, even if there are those who reject the message or those who see no point in giving the message of Islam to people.

Moreover if you compare this with our founder, he travelled all four corners of the world, like India, China, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, China, Iran, Uganda, Iraq and Saudi Arabia by foot spreading the word of honesty and message of God to the whole of humanity. He also eased the pain of people by helping them through whatever means possible. People of all these countries still regard the founder of our faith as "Someone Holy from the east" and for your kind information in a small place in Bhutan where Buddhists refer to him as "Guru Gompka Maharaj" meaning the prophet of their community. Also, "Guru Nanak" issued them water by the grace of God and before that it was ice. Our founder touched the ice; it became water and hasn't become ice for the past 500 years.

Meanwhile your Prophet had a hard time travelling from Medina to Mecca, and you expect us to believe in him?

This is basically a repetition of what was said in a previous session, and it was mostly answered when it came up before. In here though we will have to point out a number of responses to new statements that were made in the above paragraph:

First of all, whether random people from Uganda or Bhutan regard "Guru Nanak" as a "Holy" man or as their "prophet", this is really not a proof at all, since they may have misunderstood something about him, or at most loaded him with the understanding of what a "holy man" is according to their own conventions. If the religion of these non-Muslims who allegedly met "Guru Nanak" was incorrect,

there is no way in which their naming him a "holy man" can have any true input into the discussion of whether he was the founder a true religion or not.

With respect to the alleged wonder of turning ice into water by touching it with his hand, again this is something that is not a proof in itself concerning the truth of the message that is brought forth by any person. Yes, in the case of a true Prophet we can talk about the miracles that they brought, but this is only in conjunction with the fact that their message in its totality did not say anything about God which should not be attributed to Him.

We have shown before that this is not the case with Sikhism, so the question of great wonders is a moot point. Not only this, but even if somehow there were no theological problems in Sikhism, we would still have the obvious problem that the founder of Sikhism was calling towards a new religion. Since we know that Muhammad ﷺ was indeed the Last Prophet and Messenger of Allah, and we also know that he told us there would be no new Prophet after him, and that no new religion will be born, then we know that the claims of anyone who comes after him saying things like "There is no Muslim" has to be false and untrue. This is not said as a way of insulting members of other religions, but it has to be made clear that when an elect of God speaks and says certain words that we know to be from God, it is not possible for these words to have been spoken in vain.

Coming now to the issue of the Prophet's ﷺ trip from Makkah to Madinah, we had mentioned before that the travelling of (true) Prophets is not necessarily a sign of their greatness, as the greatness in rank is something that is granted directly by Allah, and in many cases we do not even know the ranking of the vast majority of Prophets and Messengers, and it is not allowed for us Muslims to compare their deeds to see which Prophet is higher than the other one. It is possible that one Prophet had an easier time travelling from one place to another while another one did not, or perhaps Allah commanded one Prophet to stay in a certain city while another Prophet was ordered to travel for long distances. So this analogy is definitely incorrect.

But since this matter has been raised up again as a way of implying that our Prophet ﷺ did not go through any adversity, we have to say that Muhammad ﷺ went through a large amount of hardships in order for us Muslims to be in the position we are in today. All Muslims know of the incident where the Prophet ﷺ went to the city of Ta'if after having been rejected in Makkah, and how he was derisively thrown out of that city, which rocks being hurled at him by the inhabitants of Ta'if.

We also know about the hardships he and his clan had to go through in the Shi'ab-e-Abi Talib for a period of three years when they were boycotted by the other clans of Makkah in all matters, including a prohibition on buying or selling

anything to Muhammad's ﷺ clan. This often reached the point where the Muslims and the Prophet's (Salla Alahu Alayhi Wa Sallam) kinsmen could not find enough food to satisfy their hunger, and had to resort to the eating of leaves of trees and skins of animals in order to avoid death. Even after the Muslims migrated to Madinah their problems persisted for many years, to the point that the Arab tribes came together to totally annihilate the Muslims community once and for all in the incident of the Battle of the Confederates, but were unable to do so thanks to the Mercy and Power of Allah.

There are enormous other problems that Muhammad ﷺ had to undergo in the process of propagating the message of Allah to humanity and these can be seen by anyone who reads his authentic biography. We only mentioned a few of them so that the readers will know that the idea that Muhammad ﷺ had an "easy route" towards spreading his message is untrue, and that he went through enormous difficulties before Allah granted victory to the religion of Islam.

And we see that the issue of him being able to "only travel" from Makkah to Madinah is tied to the persecution he faced, since (a) the reason for his migration was due to the difficulties he faced in Makkah and the fact that the Muslims needed a new city in order to survive as a community and (b) even during his migration and for many years after that, the Prophet ﷺ was under the threat of being assassinated, his followers were under threat of annihilation, and it was only through the grace of Allah that He allowed the message of Islam to survive and prosper until this day. It is the height of impropriety to say that Muhammad ﷺ was "only" able to undertake a journey from Makkah to Madinah, when the situation he faced was of such difficulty.

Did your prophet do something which actually changed the life of people in practical terms?

We believe and know for a fact that those men and women who entered Islam and who later on went on to change the entire world are the practical example of the change which Muhammad ﷺ brought to the globe. And this is something that has no parallel in the history of human civilization, where a small group of people living in a corner of the Arabian Peninsula were able to expand their influence and followers, take on and defeat some of the biggest world players at that time, conquer a sizable portion of the then-known world, and open the doors for the conversion of a large percentage of the inhabitants of such lands to the religion of Islam, and all of this within the span of one century.

On a day to day basis, we can also definitively say that the Prophet ﷺ has changed the lives of hundreds of millions of people all over the world up to this day. And this is truly the case, since there is no other religious leader whose daily life has been so meticulously documented, to the point that his followers

have a guide in terms of what they should wear, how they should walk, what they should and should not eat, what they should say when they enter the restroom and when they leave it, how they should behave in the marketplace, and on and on. This is a true change in the practical lives of the people who saw him in his day and age, and of those who did not get the chance to see him, but who are so moved by him that they strive to carry out every aspect of Islam, and who have the desire to follow the footsteps of the Prophet ﷺ even in those things that are not obligatory in the religion.

Our founder didn't convert anyone for giving lure of virgins something like that. It is your Prophet who introduced this idea in order to lure people into Islam.

The matter of “virgins” (houris in fact) has been discussed at length before. In here we want to discuss the idea of “luring” people into Islam by means of such promises in Paradise.

First of all, the majority of the Verses where the talk of ‘Houris’ is mentioned are from the Makkan period of Islam, long before there was any chance for half-hearted Muslims to enter the religion based on the promise of some easy worldly or other-worldly gains. We have to remind the reader about the great difficulties the Muslims faced during the Makkan period and great parts of the Madinan period. If there was any “lure”, this would be applicable only to those people who wished to enter Islam for its worldly benefits, and the so-called “virgins” would have been a nice “add-in” to consider in their minds.

But for those Muslims who had to live in a constant daily struggle simply to stay alive as well as for those non-Muslims who saw with their own eyes the loss of wealth and worldly prestige that normally accompanied someone embracing Islam, one cannot say that the “lure for virgins in Paradise” would have been a contributing factor at all. This is obvious, for when one has all the luxuries available in a given society, one will not join a religious community that is poor even if there is promise for great rewards in the afterlife, unless one truly believes that the religion in question is really true and is convinced of this in his heart.

So we know from this discussion that the idea of “virgins” as a sort of “stick” to lure people into Islam is a false statement, as it has no bearing to the reality that the Muslims faced for most of the Prophet’s ﷺ life.

Moreover read the black history of Islamic rule in India during the time Moghuls: When Hindu temples were destroyed, women were raped, and it was only Sikhs who even though they were always outnumbered broke the back of Islamic rule in India. Go and ask a Hindu and they

will tell you that so many of their daughters were raped by Muslims. My advice to you is that you should also consider this black chapter of the Islamic state in India where so many of our brothers and sisters were martyred and not a single one converted to Islam. They gave up their lives but refuse to give up their faith.

With respect to what is claimed as being a black chapter in Islamic history, then we say that the mere fact that someone claims that his daughters were raped by such-and-such person does not mean that such a thing has actually occurred. In fact, the basis for proving rape is very stringent in Islam, so the claims cannot be given out right and left without any substantiation. This is especially so when we are dealing with historical accounts that have been passed on by those who may have enmity towards Islam, for it is very much possible that such things may have been totally made up. Even if there is truth to it, in that case the specific circumstances under which such alleged rapes happened have to be brought forward, and then a judgment may be made as to what is the level of crimes that were committed.

The same case applies to the destruction of temples: It has to be corroborated that such destruction was indeed done (a) only to non-Muslim places of worship (b) was done only out of spite of the non-Muslims' religious beliefs, as opposed to political considerations (c) was not carried out when non-Muslims fought each other (say Hindus fought other Hindus) but rather was only the act of Muslims. One has to study the specific circumstances for the destruction of each temple based on strong primary evidences, not based on hearsay and rumors, or stories concocted in order to portray one side in a certain light. After all this is done, then one can make a claim of whether indeed temple destruction was carried out on a large scale out of spite for the non-Muslims' beliefs, or whether there were other factors involved as well.

Additionally, consider that during the rule of the Muslims, not all of the advisers and servants of the rulers were Muslims; there were non-Muslim civil servants as well. Non-Muslim leaders also entered into political alliances with Muslim rulers and governors, either to strengthen their own rule or for other reasons. Considering the fact that warfare was a way of life for most people in those ages all over the world, it is only natural that there would have been numerous instances of loss of life and property, not only for non-Muslims but for the Muslims as well.

Concerning the Sikhs not converting to Islam in spite of losing their lives, we again have to go back to the question of whether the Sikh religion is correct to begin with: Without correctness of the religion, every death in the path of that religion is not worth it, and will not help the fighter for that faith attain any bliss in the Afterlife. We understand that this is an emotional issue for the Sikhs just

as the battles in the early era of Islam are an emotional issue for us Muslims, but it is necessary for us to put these emotional facets to the side and consider the theology underpinning each religion before making any comment about the correctness of the given faith.

So in modern times how do you think Sikhs will forget those sacrifices so easily. So let me tell you that giving Da'wah to Sikhs is not an easy thing. The whole world might convert to Islam. But we Sikhs will never convert to Islam, this should be absolutely made loud and clear.

It is not an issue of Sikhs remembering or forgetting what had happened to them in previous times. It is merely a matter of accepting that the truth is one and that the faith that professes this truth is also one. So our discussion should be centered on the correctness of our religious doctrines, and the emotional aspects of who may have suffered at the hands of other people should be mostly left out of this dialogue. Yes, we included some small discussion concerning the suffering of the Prophet ﷺ and the early Muslims at the hands of the Arab idolaters, but even this is not the main topic we would discuss with anyone. Even if an Arab idolater were to present himself in front of us, we would limit our discussion to the evils of idolatry and why their ideology is wrong, not push them into a defensive stance with stories of what they did to the Muslims when the message of Islam started to be publicized.

With respect to the "guarantee" that Sikhs will never convert to Islam, this is similar to the challenge that was presented to us previously. And as we had mentioned before, our success or failure is not gauged by the number of people who become Muslims, since the turning of the hearts is something that is totally in Allah's hands. We simply encourage the people to not stay away from Islam simply out of spite for the Muslim Da'ee (propagator), since the Da'ee will not be too upset by the people's not accepting Islam, and the loss will be only for the non-Muslim.

Session #4:

As you have stated that Islam is the only correct path and other religions are misleading. This is like talking about chalk and cheese. If other faiths are false then why would they even be born on this earth? If God wanted the whole world to be in Islam so why did God create other religions, only to later say that they are false?

Allah says in the Qur'an that had He willed, all the souls would have been guided, but that it is the true passing of His Promise that Hellfire will be filled. In Islam, we say that each and every single action done by every single being in the Universe, whether big or small has been created by Allah Himself. This also

includes the “bad” or “evil” things that a person may think or act upon-including the deviation of people into making up religions- since it is impossible to contemplate that actions are created by someone other than Allah, the Creator of all.

However, with respect to the original message sent by Allah to mankind through all the numerous Prophets that have walked over the Earth, then these were definitely from Allah’s Order and Command, and there was nothing false about such messages. The only issue in here was that either (a) the messages themselves were distorted by people as they were unable to hold on to the true teachings of the Prophet or Messenger that was sent to them or (b) the time for that Prophet and his teachings passed, and it was meant that the previous Prophet’s teachings were to be supplanted by the new Prophet and his new teachings.

We firmly believe that all the people in the world should come to the way of Islam as expounded by Muhammad ﷺ, as his is the final message and it is the only message that is meant to be for the entire world. So in this way both ‘problems’ are resolved: If one is following an erroneous version of a previous religion, he can find salvation through Islam, and he will not be questioned concerning the bad things he committed in his previous religion. If one was following the correct version of a previous religion – which is extremely rare to find in practice but has been included here only as an example- then he will also be saved through following Islam, as he will know that the final version of the true message from Allah to mankind rests with Muhammad ﷺ and the Muslim way of life.

From the above we know three things then: With respect to Allah and His Attributes, He did not reveal false religious tenets (such as blasphemy concerning Allah) to any people at any time, and He only revealed that which was in harmony with the truth. Concerning the peripheral rituals of the religion (like how to worship Allah), these were revealed as different to distinct times and lands, but there was nothing “false” about such rituals; it is simply a matter that such rituals were later replaced by something else, and humanity was told to follow the new rituals, culminating in the Islamic religion and the Islamic ways of worship. Finally, concerning the actions of the people who made up blasphemies and things in the religion that were not originally revealed by Allah, this is not connected to Allah’s revelations or inspirations sent down to His elect Messengers, but it is rather connected to Allah’s Creating such actions within his creatures, and this is something that is totally possible to attribute to Allah, as it is His prerogative as to who enters Paradise and who enters the Hellfire, and He can do with His Creation as He wills.

There are also human beings created by God who follow these “false religions”, would you think that God calls them false?

Allah does not call any human being "false", but rather the evil beliefs that they knowingly hold on to are termed "false beliefs" and the actions they commit in contravention to the laws He has revealed are termed "evil deeds" or "sins". There should be no objection towards calling the wrong beliefs that someone holds as "wrong" or "false" since this is what it is in reality, but there is no "falsity" in the person himself. If a non-Muslim leaves their previous religion and embraces Islam, a very big reward awaits such a person, to the point that all of his previous evil deeds are changed into good deeds. This is the worth that Allah the Exalted gives to the person who leaves the wrong beliefs and sins and joins the path of Islamic truth.

This matter is a major problem with the beliefs of Islam: This self-proclamation that Islam is the "only path". "Only path" sounds absurd, as respecting the beliefs of other religions that are also part of the same creation is the proper way to think about other religions. God takes care of them as well. Yes, there might be some problem with worldly religions when it comes to drinking, drugs or something like that, but if they read their Bible, Torah or whatever book they have they would be fine and would be close for achieving salvation.

The Muslim says that Allah does show mercy and care to all of humanity for a limited period of time, but if that person's belief at the time of death was erroneous even though the truth was known to him, then that person is deserving of the punishment as specified by Allah.

The proof is on the non-Muslim's side to show that God shows mercy and care to all people at all times (in life and after their deaths) even if they choose to follow a path other than what He has revealed. If the religion chosen by the people did not make any difference, then there would be absolutely no distinction in the way a Muslim, Hindu, Sikh, or Christian is treated in the Afterlife, since according to the non-Muslim's reasoning all religions would lead to salvation. But even the non-Muslim contradicts this in the above paragraph when he says that Islam's position is "absurd", which means he sees falsehood in Islam according to his understanding. This shows that in the view of the non-Muslim the religions do not all lead to the same blessed end, and that there certainly is distinction between what leads to salvation and what does not. [Unless he wants to say that falsehood leads to salvation, in which case his situation becomes precarious from another angle].

In fact, even according to our Sikh opponent, the whole point of there being a religion called "Sikhism" would be superfluous if the above was correct. After all, the Sikh religion has its founders, set of beliefs, specific rituals, etc, which distinguish it from other religions. According to Sikhism, if one wishes to gain salvation, then one has to follow the rules and regulations as laid out by the

founders of the Sikh religion, and has to abstain from the prohibitions laid out by Sikhism.

Just as a small example to illustrate the matter at hand, one of the proofs brought forth above in favor of the assertion that "Guru Nanak" was not a Muslim was that he spoke out against Muslim practices such as fasting or pilgrimage. This obviously shows that he considered these well-established Muslim practices to be against the broader goal of spiritual salvation as he envisaged it, and that such a practice was incorrect according to the religion he was propounding. If there was truly an atmosphere of "many paths" in Sikhism, there would be no need for "Guru Nanak" to have spoken such things, for he would have considered the path of Muslim fasting and pilgrimage as one of the approved paths through which salvation could have been achieved.

Another example was when our Sikh opponent said "Guru Ji never accepted teachings of Islam and Hinduism." This is an even clearer illustration that "Guru Nanak" saw something wrong in the fundamental teachings of both religions, and he felt that the correct way was something other than these two paths; at the end of the day this was the reason –according to the Sikhs- that a whole new religion was formed, rather than a reform movement within one of the existing religions.

Coming back to the discussion, if the only point of Sikhism, Islam, or any other religion was to tell its followers to generally abstain from evils such as drinking and doing drugs, there would be no need for the religion itself to exist; the evils such as drinking alcohol or doing drugs can be elucidated through scientific studies and case studies highlighting the differences between the group that involves itself in these actions and the group that does not involve itself in these things; there would be no need for referring to any of the religions known to man, or to say that there are blemishes which affect the one taking alcohol or drugs in the spiritual realm.

Rather, what each religion-including Sikhism- says is that the human being can attain salvation if it follows the ways prescribed by that religion. Our disagreement concerns the identity of that religion, and this is where we Muslims say that only Islam can truly show the way for salvation, while other religions cannot do so and will only lead people towards perdition. We have said this before and need to mention it again: It is not a matter of disrespecting or insulting other people's religions, but it is a matter of knowing that the truth about a matter is one, and that when a claim is made to multiple mutually contradictory "truths", there is a serious problem with some of the alleged "truths".

What we as Muslims are calling for then is for all those –Sikhs and others- who believe that there are multiple mutually contradictory paths towards achieving salvation to seriously reconsider their ideology in this respect. They will find that

their ideas fall apart at the very first hurdle, as it is impossible that even an "ultra-tolerant" religion could come into being without criticizing the "intolerance" of other religions, thereby showing that there is something intrinsically wrong with the paths laid out by other religions, even as they advocate a message of "multiple paths" for salvation.

In our religion we respect all faiths of the world neither we seek converts neither we ask for beg for converts for bring them to our religion. Our Sikh religion considers changing beliefs a sin.

As we have said before, the lack of seeking converts points to either one of two things: Either the religion is too arrogant to seek converts since it does not believe that others are worthy of salvation and is happy to see them in spiritual perdition, or the religion is not sure of what is really true, and does not know whether what they are following is the truth at all.

As per what was mentioned that "Our Sikh religion considers changing beliefs a sin.", then this only shows that the Sikh religion does not have a firm grasp on what they believe to be truth. Otherwise the followers of the Sikh religion would not wait for even a moment in calling people to what they consider to be the truth, and would have put all of their efforts in making the message of their religion known to everyone in the world.

We also need to concentrate our attention on the use of the word "sin" in this case. What is being said in here is that it is against God's plan for His slaves that they should convert from one religion to the other, even from a religion preaching falsehood to the religion preaching truth, and that as an extension, if someone were to do that, it would count among his bad deeds.

We have to ask in here whether there was any way in which the Sikh religion could have possibly spread to have the millions of adherents it has today, since at some point all religions need new converts in order to jump-start their religion, or otherwise it will remain a set of teachings restricted to books. As an extension of this point, we have to ask whether any of the deeds the first converts to Sikhism performed were considered to be good...since one cannot have his deeds counted as good if the overarching principle he is doing them for is a "sin". Moreover, if the deeds of the first Sikhs (the converts) were counted as being "bad", then how can we rely upon people whose deeds are "bad" to pass anything "good" to their children (the Sikhs that were not converts but Sikhs by birth). Thus, we know that the principle of "converting to any religion is sin" has to be wrong, for otherwise even the Sikhs – by their own admission- are doing nothing other than perpetuating "sins" and "evils".

Saying that "all paths are true" is the way of showing respect to all religions. We don't criticize them as believers or unbelievers which as stated in your Quran.

First, we have to understand that the term "respect to all religions" is a flawed concept, for one cannot fully respect a given religion while believing that the religion has serious untruths attached to it. We are not talking in here about hurling abuse at other people's religions or whatever they hold to be sacred, but we are talking about how truth is known and how we accept that a given belief is true and that its opposing belief is false. This is something so obvious that even our Sikh opponent has not been able to stay away from it in spite of his protestations: This is why in every paragraph where he mentions the Qur'an or anything about Islam –like the paragraph above- he cannot help but to criticize something of it. We know that he is criticizing these things because he believes them to be false, but to then turn around and say that Islam is one of the paths that are true sounds very strange; either the meanings of "true" and "false" are something other than what we commonly define them as, or our opponent does not understand the implications of the statements that are made by his religion.

Now, coming to the matter of what the Qur'an says about humanity being either believers or disbelievers, this is a statement of fact, and it is not something that should be a subject for endless debate. It is clear that there are those people who have accepted the Islamic religion and have submitted themselves to the true God, and these are termed as "believers". Then there are others who chose not to accept the truth and chose lack of submission as their way of life. These are the "disbelievers". Even though the non-Muslim disagrees with Islam being the correct religion, he will have to agree that there is a true way of life, and those who believe in it and uphold it are the "believers" in that religion, while those who turn away from it and disbelieve in it are the "disbelievers". Again, this is not meant to insult anyone, but to simply state the fact that truth is one and that the followers of that truth are distinct from those who chose not to follow it.

Whenever any person comes to the Sikh temple, we have Langar halls (community kitchen) where people are fed irrespective of caste, color or religion without ever asking anyone to convert. I have myself seen Jewish people sit to eat their meals shoulder to shoulder with Sikhs and they themselves say teachings of the Sikh religion are way better than other religions.

Jews are condemned in the Qur'an but we don't sit and say and this man is a Christian or this man is a Hindu and because of this term them as unbelievers as is the case with the Quran, so due to your unbelief you have no place here. This is also a problem with the Qur'an. You Muslims simply can't show respect to others without converting them.

We don't have this sort of attitude and this is the proper way to show that all paths are true.

It is not forbidden for us Muslims to show civility and good character with the non-Muslims. We can give them food and help them as needed, and there is nothing to bar this behavior. However, just by showing kindness to someone it does not mean that this person's path is the true path. This line of thinking (that by showing kindness to someone it means that their path is true) is flawed and analogous to the one who thinks that because someone's religious path is wrong, he should be deprived of food, shelter, or any other need he may require.

Rather, as we had mentioned before, if two paths claim to have the truth, and both paths make mutually exclusive statements about the nature of God and the specificity of such statements are such that they cannot allow reconciliation (in the meanings of what they are saying), then it should be known to our non-Muslim opponent and to everyone that either one of the two is wrong, or both of them are wrong.

There is no other possibility, and if the non-Muslim thinks there is possibility for "both" to be correct, the burden of proof moves to the non-Muslim to show how this can ever be possible, considering that the fundamental statements of these paths concerning God and His Attributes are totally opposite to each other, similar to one side saying "there is only One God" and another side saying "there is no God". There is no way both "there is only One God" AND "there is no God" can both be true. In the same manner, there is no way that the statements made by the different religions about God and His Nature and Attributes can all be true at the same time. Someone is wrong, and someone's "path" is flawed.

Now, if a lay Jew or Christian comes and says that the Sikh religion is above those of other religions, there are some things that have to be mentioned: Firstly, the sayings of a lay person who is not specialized in a given field is not a proof for the Muslim. Secondly, the sayings of a non-Muslim are absolutely not a proof when religious matters are involved. Yes, we can dissect the reasons why a Jew or a Christian would say that Sikhism is better than all other religions and discuss our firm conviction that his opinion is wrong, but such a general saying from a non-Muslim can never be taken as a proof.

Concerning the Qur'an and how it describes the non-Muslims, what it mentions also holds true in here, as the Qur'an does not prohibit us from showing civility to other people (as discussed before), while at the same time confirming the fact that those who disbelieve in what Allah and His Messenger have brought are just that, disbelievers. (We are aware that at this stage the arguments from our side have become repetitive, but this because our opponent is trying to show different examples of how the truth of all paths is shown through practical examples in his religion. We have to disagree every time this comes up and show our position, even at the expense of repeating our prime argument many times).

Now we can come to the Black History of Muslims in India. In Punjab, Islamic extremists were thoroughly involved in killing of Sikhs, Hindus, Buddhists and Jains and forcibly converting them to Islam.

When someone accuses another person of a crime such as killing, it is necessary for the details of such a killing to be provided to us, so that it will be known what the exact circumstances under which such a killing took place were. This is because it is very easy to make a general claim such as "millions of our people were killed by Muslims", but it will be more challenging to bring real proof that (a) the numbers claimed are indeed correct, (b) the killings occurred only due to religious fervor and secular political considerations were totally absent, (c) the killings affected mostly those who could not defend themselves, such as unarmed men, women and children, and that (d) there was a clear religious edict given by the scholars of that time and place which allowed armies to carry out their killings with careless abandon.

And this matter is even more acute in the case of Muslim rule in India, where the supposed atrocities took place over the span of centuries, to such an extent that many of the estimates presented in such cases are either concentrated to a few rulers, or are otherwise wild guesses based on shoddy data.

We have to make it clear that our criteria for judging whether a certain killing was correct or not is whether the Islamic religion allows for this killing within the rules of a just war. If it allows for the killings as presented to us by our opponents, then we are obliged to accept that such killings were justified, and if it does not allow for such types of killings, then we say that such killings are not acceptable as per our religion. This is important to understand when discussing the Islamic rulings on any given matter and especially in terms of warfare, since at the end of the day, the actions of Muslim rulers or generals does not necessarily amount to a proof in Islam, unless it is backed up by the rules of Islamic Law.

And the same criterion applies to the matter of "forced conversions to Islam". One has to see whether these conversions were indeed forced, or whether they were entered upon by the people out of their own free will. Even if it is said that the conversions took place due to reasons other than religious fervor, we cannot say that they were literally forced into converting – since practical considerations when converting do not technically affect the validity of the conversion to Islam. Again, it is easy for a non-Muslim to say that "tens of millions of people were forced into Islam", but if (a) the conversions were actually not forced or (b) those whose ancestors were forced into Islam now believe in it with full conviction, then this is a moot point, since today's Muslims would see any call for them to go back to the ways of their non-Muslim forefathers as the real threat forcing them to change their religion, and they would have very little sympathy for anyone claiming that their ancestors many years ago were forced into Islam.

If you say that there were some other people (non-Muslims) who were involved in the killing of non-Muslims or that they were not enlightened with Islamic teachings, let me tell you that most of the decisions were taken by Muslim emperors like Aurangzeb or Jahangir.

When we talk about decisions taken with respect to killing of people in general, one has to see whether the chain of command from the supreme ruler to the executioner is really present, or whether the decisions for killing any number of people were taken by other commanders or by the soldiers themselves.

Now, the names of Jahangir and Aurangzeb are brought up specifically by Sikhs since it is held by them that these two rulers were particularly harsh against the Sikh "Gurus". What we first need to reiterate is that the words and actions of a non-Prophet are not necessarily a "decisive proof" in Islam, so it is possible to envision Jahangir or Aurangzeb having committed a number of bad deeds during his life, whether towards Sikhs or other people.

In spite of this, we would still request from our opponents to provide the specific evidences directly linking these Mughal emperors (particularly) with the killing of the Gurus. The reason why this has to be asked is because the exact wording under which the death sentences were enacted has to be established to a reasonable degree of certainty. What we have noticed from our search for the most part are that the references to these Emperors sentencing "Guru Arjan Dev" and "Tegh Bahadur" to death comes from Sikh sources themselves, or from those writers who have a very favorable slant towards the Sikh narrative. However, in these chronicles we find a number of indications that such killings were not religiously motivated, as well as contradicting evidence (both internally contradicting as well as contradicting with what is known about Islam) concerning such narratives.

In the case of Jahangir's execution of "Guru Arjan Dev", the story is normally presented as a case of the Emperor acting on trumped up charges to arrest "Arjan Dev", mostly as a result of jealousy among the Muslim clergy and nobility at the growing power of the Sikh religion. There is a long series of narrations presented concerning the specifics of how "Arjan Dev" was allegedly tried, tortured and killed by Jahangir, but we will not get too deeply into such stories. However, we need note the following passages from the narratives surrounding this event:

First: Jahangir is generally presented with a "warped personality". One online Sikh source mentions:

When drunk, Jahangir swore to Sir Thomas Roe, England's first ambassador to the Mughal court, that he would protect all the peoples of the book. Many contemporary chroniclers were not even sure quite how to describe his personal belief structure.

Roe labelled him an atheist, and although most others shied away from that term, they did not feel as though they could call him an orthodox Sunni. He relied greatly on astrologers, though that was not seen as unusual for a ruler at the time, even to the extent that he required that they work out the most auspicious time for the imperial camp to enter a city. ²⁵

Thus, it is very hard to believe that a person described in these terms can be held up to have done any action due to a fervent religious conviction, even if his biography and chroniclers claimed such a thing. This is even more of a far-fetched proposition when we consider the charges of drunkenness and astrology, matters which are explicitly not allowed in Islam, as well as the label of him being an "atheist", which would immediately throw him out of the fold of Islam. Of course, we as Muslims do not take the word of a single historian concerning the corrupt faith of a person who is said to be a Muslim as evidence of his having left Islam, but we are simply presenting these quotes since they originate from the sources of our opponents.

Our conclusion in this case would be that if the words of this Sikh source are to be trusted, then Jahangir would not have been "enlightened with Islamic teachings" at all (as claimed by the Sikh in his comments), but he would rather be carrying out his actions regardless of whether they agreed with Islamic principles or not.

Second: The historian Max Macauliffe writes that Emperor Jahangir ordered "Guru Arjan Dev" *"to erase the hymns in his Granth which were opposed to the Hindu and Musalman religions."* ²⁶

It seems very strange that a Muslim ruler passionate about his religion would care about hymns in the Sikh religion which offended Hindus, since there would be no particular concern for a devout Muslim except for those things which offend the Islamic faith. The only way we can envision this command to have been issued is if the matter of "communal harmony" comes into the picture, through which any ruler (Muslim or otherwise) may wish to calm down any religious tensions building up in his territory, since the potential for chaos and bloodshed is normally avoided at all costs.

Additionally, there is another matter which makes the above episode even more suspect, which is an alleged tract attributed to Jahangir where he says: *"In Govindwal...there was a Hindu named Arjun..."*

We say that, based on the other piece of evidence brought forth by the Sikhs, this passage is either a misattribution or mistranslation of what Jahangir thought

²⁵ http://www.sikhiwiki.org/index.php/Emperor_Jahangir#Jahangir.27s_warped_personality

²⁶ *The Sikh Religion: Its Gurus, Sacred Writings and Authors*, Vol.3, p.90

of "Arjan Dev". For why would Jahangir ask "Guru Arjan Dev" to remove passages which were offensive to Hindus if he thought that the Guru was a Hindu himself? These pieces of information brought up do not add up then, and we are left to wonder as to which one could possibly be correct.

Third: The previously mentioned online Sikh source says that Jahangir wrote:

*'In Govindwal...there was a Hindu named Arjun, in the garments of sainthood and sanctity, so much so that he had captured many of the simple-hearted of the Hindus, and even of the ignorant and foolish followers of Islam, by his ways and manners, and they had loudly sounded the drum of his holiness. They called him Guru, and from all sides stupid people crowded to worship and manifest complete faith in him. For three or four generations they had kept this shop warm. Many times it occurred to me to put a stop to this vain affair or to bring him into the assembly of the people of Islam.'*²⁷

If such an assessment was true, we would have a direct conflict between the Islamic Law and those who carried it out (that is, the Islamic government) and the "Guru". The reason for this is that the Islamic Land does not accept conversions from Islam to any other religion and according to the mass of Islamic scholars, such people who convert are to be asked to repent or face death.²⁸

So if this is the case with the lay people who become non-Muslims, what should be said about the leader who actively proselytizes to Muslims in the land of Islam, in the hopes of making Muslims abandon their religion? It is clear that a stern punishment for such a person is also forthcoming if and when the Islamic government decides to act on such a leader. On this basis alone, one could say that there is a clear reason why the Islamic ruler at that time would decide to move against "Guru Arjan Dev", even if there was no direct military confrontation between the Sikhs and Muslims at that time.

The quote we are dealing with right now also brings to light the fact that the Sikh religion did indeed seek converts from among the lay people, regardless of what stance may be attributed to Sikhism in our times. And this is something obvious which we had pointed out before in our replies as well, since it is impossible to envisage that a religion which believes that truth is on its side would sit idly, allowing the masses to be engulfed in the sea of ignorance and darkness (as far as it is concerned). The present quote then, confirms our hypothesis, that Sikhism has sought to convert people throughout its history, and is not a religion that always thinks that conversion from one religion to the other is a sin that should be avoided.

²⁷ http://www.sikhiwiki.org/index.php/Martyrdom_of_Guru_Arjan_in_the_eyes_of_non-Sikh_historians

²⁸ Here we will not argue about this Law itself, but we are simply presenting it as it is.

Fourth: The online source also mentions that at the time of “Guru Arjun Dev’s” death and the installment of his successor,

The Sikhs had formed a separate and independent identity that had nothing to do with the government agencies of the day. Thus the Sikh entity came to occupy a sort of separate state within the Mughal Empire. ²⁹

This is a very telling paragraph, for it shows that the Sikh community had taken steps to construct a sort of state within a state. Such a development, anywhere in the world, would be something that would in many cases evoke a harsh backlash from the formal government, since it is impossible for there to be stability in a land where some of its constituents do not respond to the government, or (as in the case of the Sikhs) consider the entire social and political structure of the land to be invalid.

There is more corroboration to this view, as we read in Dayar Gaul’s ‘Martyrdom as Bridegroom’ that:

The fifth Guru took the initiative of building a ‘well-knit and disciplined organization’, generally of the peasants, i.e. Jatts. Moreover, the lifestyle of the guru tended to counter the royal hegemony of the Mughal emperor. The guru picked on objects such as horses, elephants and bodyguards- all signifiers of state hegemony. Such a counter-hegemonic image of the guru, who was being addressed as sacha padshah³⁰, did raise apprehensions in the minds of the authorities, as if the guru was developing a self-government within the empire – a state within a state.

The guru was constructing a new cultural discourse which in the future was to assume the form of a movement for liberation and establish an indigenous rule of the Punjabi people. ³¹

This work mentions that this spirit of non-conformism actually started with the “Guru Nanak” himself, who had characterized the invasion of Babur, the founder of the Mughal Empire as ‘the bridal procession of sin’. It is further noted that:

*Such a legacy of protest, resistance and confrontation, as a counter-hegemonic ideology, became the salient feature of Sikhism. But the Mughal state took serious notice of this ideology only during the period of Guru Arjan Dev.*³²

²⁹ http://www.sikhiwiki.org/index.php/Guru_Har_Gobind

³⁰ Meaning ‘The True King’

³¹ Martyr as Bridegroom: A Folk Representation of Bhagat Singh, p.32

³² Ibid, p. 33

So now we can see two strands of problems arising from the Sikh community and its Gurus in its relationship with the Empire: Not only were they actively involved in proselytization to the people – including Muslims- at large, but also they had slowly developed a system through which they were becoming socially and politically independent from the central government. Given such a case, it was only a matter of time before one of the Mughal Emperors would have decided to act against the Sikh leaders and/or their lay followers, since there could be no stability in the land if this situation was left unchecked.

Now, coming to the question of 'who was right?' in all of this, it all goes back to the theology of each religion, and which one pivots itself on correct fundamentals and which one fails to do so – exactly the reason why we always encourage our readers to first handle the belief system of the religions in question before moving on to secondary matters.

In the case of Aurangzeb and the killing of "Tegh Bahadur", great importance is placed on the religious nature of his execution of "Tegh Bahadur". Thus, huge stress is placed on the supposed "injustices" of strict orthodox Islamic rule at that time, how the non-Muslim majority suffered terribly due to these regulations, and how "Tegh Bahadur" sacrificed his life in order to preserve the "sanctity" of religious freedom in his land. While reading the narratives surrounding this story as well, we are forced to point out the following inconsistencies and make the subsequent comments:

First: As we know from our previous discussion, the tensions between the Sikh community and its political aspirations versus the established Muslim rulers had already come to boiling point with the execution of "Arjan Dev".

So what we see after this was an increasing militarization of the Sikh community. We read:

*Guru Hargobind reacted to this situation in the manner of a hero determined to hold aloft the banner of Dharma. His war with the Mughals was in the true spirit of Dharmayudh. His successor, Guru Har Rai was similarly inspired when he led his troops to the bank of river Sutlej in order to block the passage across the river of Aurangzeb's troops marching in hot pursuit of Dara Shikoh. The moral issue was very clear. Dara symbolised the forces of good where his adversary Aurangzeb unleashed tyrannical policy of religious intolerance...*³³

The above is, of course, a very brief description, but we see that the relations between Muslims and Sikhs had already reached a point of outright warfare before the time of "Tegh Bahadur", with the Islamic laws symbolizing in the Sikh mind the 'forces of evil'. Even if this Guru's specific policies were meant to go

³³ History of Sikh Gurus Retold: 1606-1708 C.E., p.655

back to a more peaceful approach, it would not be easy for the sitting rulers to forget the type of violence that could be unleashed if the Sikh community would decide to take on their rule once more, especially since the 'evil' was still present as far as the Sikhs were concerned. So any suspicion from part of the Muslim rulers would not come in a vacuum, but rather from relatively close historical antecedents and contemporary attitudes among the Sikh leaders and their followers towards the Muslim religion and its laws.

Thus, responding to 'allegations' that "Tegh Bahadur" lay down his life only in order to save Hinduism, S.S. Gandhi says:

Guru Tegh Bahadur's struggle was against Adharma' the greatest epitome of which was Aurangzeb and the Sunni character of his government. To achieve his purpose the Guru propagated his mission among the people. During his tour in eastern parts of the country, in the Bangar and in the Malwa region of the Punjab, the Guru's message brought new awakening among them who began to rally round the Gurus. The conceptual framework and methods of operation conforming to that were sharply different from those of Aurangzeb. The clash was inherent in the situation.

So here we have more or less the same situation as what we saw in the case of "Arjan Dev": Active and open propagation of a non-Muslim religion (which would already be a basis for punishment); but we have some additional factors as well, such as a more overt opposition to the Islamic religion and its principles, and the recent experiences that the Muslim rulers had gone through in terms of physically battling the Sikh leaders and their followers.

Second: There is a substantial amount of effort put into showing how "barbarous" the rules of Islam were at that time, specifically with respect to discrimination against non-Muslims.

The picture is brought up of "Tegh Bahadur" sacrificing his life (the good in this world) so that the Moghul Empire (all the evil in this world) may be put to an end. The "evil" in this case is, according to the Sikh narrative, the discriminatory practices of the Islamic government, including the levying of Jizya (tax payable by non-Muslims in order to be protected by the Muslim polity), the destruction of Hindu and Sikh temples, forced conversions (in the form of killing those who refused to accept Islam), and other such things.

Before we mention anything, we have to reiterate that for the Sikh mind, the application of Islamic Laws was itself the source of all evil. S.S. Gandhi writes:

...the orthodox mode of thinking had its full play during Aurangzeb's reign...³⁴

³⁴ History of Sikh Gurus Retold: 1606-1708 C.E., p.647

So wherever the actions of Aurangzeb can be shown to comply with the orthodox understanding of Islam, we will note this, but when they do not agree with what is written in the formal books of Islamic religious laws, there is no need to deeply immerse ourselves into the historicity of such events, for even if they did occur, it cannot be blamed on the Muslim "orthodox mode of thinking".

We do need to mention though, that there are certain matters in proper Islamic laws which would raise the objections of those non-Muslims whose minds are not set at looking at the fundamental theological and scriptural basis upon which Islam basis its claim to truth, but rather wish to see which rules and regulations in Islam are contrary to what they are currently accustomed to. Therefore, certain practices, such as the levying of Jizya-tax on the non-Muslims, to the extent that the non-Muslim pays more than the Muslim, are clearly parts of the Islamic system of governance. (It would not really make a difference to our discussion with such non-Muslims whether a Muslim government collects this Jizya in a fair manner according to the directives of Islam, or whether the collection is done unfairly, since the main objection is to the Jizya itself, not to external factors affecting its collection).

So the non-Muslim (Sikh, Hindu, etc.) says that such rules are evidence that in the Islamic system of governance, their religions are put at a lower level than the Islamic religion.

To this we say that an Islamic government is precisely that, an "Islamic" system of governance. It is clear that the underlying ideology under which the government operates will be given preference over other modes of thought.

In fact, our opponents have very clear analogies for this vis-à-vis the secular nation-states of today: We see that within a given nation-state, the constitution of that country and the laws deriving from the institutions set up by the constitution are given precedence over the laws of other nation-states and other lands. Thus, these are the "supreme law of the land", and it is imperative for anyone who resides in that land, be they citizens or foreigners, to understand this precept, for otherwise they will put themselves on a collision course with the country and its institutions.

(As an aside, if someone says that such countries grant "freedom of worship", we say that such an analogy is incorrect. What is more appropriate is to think of how the laws of 'Country B' would be applied in 'Country A'... it is obvious that widespread application of the laws of 'Country B' will not be possible in 'Country A'. Yes, there are specific places where these laws can be put into effect, such as the embassies and consulates of 'Country B', but outside of these few places, the supreme law of the land will remain the rules and regulations of 'Country A')

In the case of the Islamic government, the "supreme laws of the land" are the Islamic primary texts and Islamic Jurisprudence in general. And our basis for making the Islamic laws and regulations the preeminent factors for judging the land is our solid conviction that Allah the Exalted has revealed these rules to humankind, and that it is our duty to spread the system of Allah on this Earth. At the end of the day then, it comes back to the theological and scriptural proofs for Islam's correctness that we have mentioned time and time again: If these establish the absolute correctness of Islam, then the secondary laws that follow (such as Muslims ruling the lands of Islam according to Islamic rules) are to be followed to the best of our ability.

Third: In the book "History of the Sikh Gurus Retold: 1606 C.E. to 1708 C.E." we read of an earlier incident where "Tegh Bahadur" was ordered to be arrested by Emperor Aurangzeb.

As to the reason why this arrest order was given, it is stated that: *"the orthodox Ulemas the Brahmins were much upset at the deep impact of the teachings and they complained to the Emperor that the whole atmosphere was being vitiated by the Guru. The Emperor, after examining the complaint, issued orders that the Guru should appear before him.*

*The Guru, however, did not pay heed to this and continued his work as usual. Thereupon the Emperor commissioned Alam Khan to effect the arrest of the Guru...'*³⁵

We have to mention that this story is very strange if we consider the previous statements concerning Aurangzeb to be true: If he really was radically discriminating (as per the non-Muslim's definition) against all non-Muslims during his rule, why would members of the Hindu upper classes and their religious representatives be so close to him, to the point that they could voice their concerns about "Tegh Bahadur" and influence edicts proclaiming his detention and arrest?

If anything, the story brought up (if correct) would serve as evidence that Emperor Aurangzeb was concerned about keeping stability and harmony within his Empire to the point of taking counsel and close advice from non-Muslims. The fact that the Sikh "Guru" was the object of the arrest order is not of great significance here, since it would be the case of one non-Muslim leader being arrested at the instigation of other segments (including non-Muslim segments) of the society. So this is a matter of political expediency that would have been carried out whether the government had a religious inclination or a secular one, and it should not be a matter of wrangling between us and the Sikhs.

³⁵ History of Sikh Gurus Retold: 1606-1708 C.E., p.630

Fourth: In many of the biographies of “Tegh Bahadur”, it is said that Emperor Aurangzeb took stiff measures against non-Muslims, such as ordering their places of worship and study to be destroyed, for Jizya to be taken and for people to be forcibly converted to Islam.

We had already mentioned that since the discussion was not about Aurangzeb himself but rather about what Muslim orthodoxy says in such cases, it is proper to see what the Muslim scholars say about such issues. In the case of Aurangzeb, we have the added advantage that under his orders, the famous Fatwa al-Alamgiri (or Fatwa al-Hindiyyah), was compiled with the help of hundreds of scholars, so it will be easy for us to have some idea about what the prevailing mood was concerning these matters.

When it comes to the issue of “temples” of non-Muslim religion, there are a number of factors need to be considered before any judgment is made about Aurangzeb’s actions. This is because there are a number of things that can cause a non-Muslim place of worship to be rightfully destroyed by the ruler, such as:

- (a) The non-Muslims trying to build a place of worship for themselves in between the large cities of the Muslims.
- (b) There may have been a non-Muslim place of worship in a village on which many other edifices were built to the point that non-Muslim people from the large cities also went there to pray. A difference of opinion is mentioned in this respect, but the more correct view is still that such places are not to be destroyed.
- (c) It could be that activities that are considered to be openly vulgar were being committed openly in such temples or around such temples. Examples are given of marriages where incest is involved, but other things such as open adultery, etc., also fall under the same category
- (d) It may be that the recently built non-Muslim temples become incorporated into a large Muslim metropolis, and in this instance some scholars also allowed for such temples to be destroyed.
- (e) The destruction of such places may have been related to the breach of the prohibition on non-Muslims having and storing weapons with themselves.³⁶

Here we do not wish to get into the specifics of every claim of alleged temple destruction, but we simply wanted to highlight that there are certain correct reasons as to why non-Muslim temples could be destroyed according to Islamic Laws.

³⁶ The above list rules can be verified from al-Fatawa al-Hindiyyah, Vol.2, pp.247-253 (shamela Version)

Coming to the issue of the Jizya-tax, this is definitely something that is known in Islam and which the Muslim government has a right to take from all able-bodied non-Muslim male subjects. What is strange about some of the things mentioned by the non-Muslims though with respect to Aurangzeb, is their combination of the order for Jizya with 'forceful conversions', which is a wrongful mingling of the two directives.

The reason for this to be an obvious mistake is that Jizya is taken only from those whom the government agrees to protect from among the non-Muslims, so that the non-Muslims may practice their religion as they wish. But when we have a call for 'forced conversion', this is actually a call for general war to be launched on the non-Muslims, and in such a case, Jizya is not taken nor even accepted from the non-Muslims if they were to present it to the Muslim ruler.

So what we would have expected, if the narratives were correct, was for the Jizya-tax itself to be abolished within the Mughal Empire, after which a general war would be called where the general non-Muslim populace would only have the choice of either Islam or death. But such a policy change has not been mentioned in any of the works trying to discredit Aurangzeb, leading us to believe that there could have been another governor or deputy who came up with this idea, but this too is speculation since there is no mention of any other specific personages calling for such directives (yet again supposing that the story is true in the first place).

Fourth: Another set of discrepancies in the narrative are also mentioned in this [link](#), where the work of Max Macauliffe is analyzed. We will reproduce some of them below:

The entire narrative though scripted extremely well is void of any single reference either from the Mughal or British historians especially when he mentions the conversations / exchanges between Aurangzeb and the Guru at the court in Delhi... (this is interestingly the same thing that S.S. Gandhi mentions in his work 'History of the Sikh Gurus Retold', with the objection being raised that Aurangzeb was far away from his court at that time and that it would be impossible for the many stories of a series of meetings between the Emperor and "Tegh Bahadur" to be true)

The detailed narrative in Macauliffe's work is also surprisingly void of any references to specific dates of when the Kashmiri Pandits led by Pandit Kirpa Ram called on Gururji and when Gururji began his unfortunate voyage to Delhi...

it is noteworthy that Iftekhhar Khan (Governor of Kashmir) was not a hero in the administration of Aurangzeb. He was once before in 1671 removed

from his rank and only restored to it after gaining an imperial pardon. Maasir-e-Alamgir pg 69... The only other time Iftekhhar Khan probably came close to Kashmir is when he was asked to reinforce Fidai Khan who had gone on an expedition to Jammu in July of 1674. Maasir-i-Alamgiri – pg 82...

Surprisingly despite all the oppression going on in Kashmir against the Hindus, Aurangzeb ordered Prithvi Singh, zamindar of Jammu to accompany Ludi Khan in the Kabul expedition of 1674. (Maasari-i-Alamgiri pg 87)

Even when we look at some of the stories associated with the next Guru, "Gorbind Singh", we are faced with the same type of inconsistent narratives. For example, it is written that:

Hindu Rajas led by Ajmer Chand of Kahlir and his father Bhim Chand personally went to Aurangzeb and stirred up the wrath of the Emperor by telling him that Guru Gobiñd Singh claimed to be Sachä Patshāh: True King, sat on a raised platform; a prerogative of the Emperor only, and was corrupting both Hinduism and Islam. Aurangzeb ordered a large army under Amir Khan of Sarhand and Zabardast Khan of Lahore to proceed against the Guru.³⁷

Similarly, it is mentioned that:

Raja Ajmer Chand of Kehlur and his cohorts from the area submitted a petition to Aurangzeb representing Guru Gobind Singh as a mortal foe of Mughal empire, Islam and Hindu religion. They sought the help of Imperial forces to exterminate the dangerous common enemy.³⁸

Again, we have the same problems bedeviling this story as the ones before it: High-ranking Hindu personalities going to personally meet the Aurangzeb telling him that not only Islam, but Hinduism was also being corrupted. And again what is the more interesting thing about this is that such a petition (of a common foe against Hinduism and Islam) can be presented with such a wording to the Emperor, and that Aurangzeb seems concerned that Hinduism was being distorted along with Islam, in spite of the picture that is painted of the Emperor elsewhere. (We have to mention that if it were true that the "Guru" was being treated like a king in his lifestyle, this would have immediately raised the concerns of any ruler living anywhere in the world. As we had mentioned previously, it is not possible for any land to survive peacefully while there is a segment of the population which gives allegiance to some authority other than

³⁷ http://www.sikh-history.com/sikhhist/events/siege_of_anandpur.html

³⁸ <http://www.zafarnama.com/>

the formal ruler of the land. This would be the case even if the Islamic religion was not part of the equation, since the matter is not specifically about Islam, but about how the rules and laws of a country work in relation to its residents).

So these are some of the things we can bring up with respect to these two Emperors and how the execution of two of the "Sikh Gurus" was carried out and the underlying reasons behind it. There is a lot more that can be discussed about these and other historical issues, but as we had mentioned before, our interest in the history of such incidents is not great, as we need to concentrate on the theological issues dividing Sikhs and Muslims; and as we had also mentioned, Aurangzeb's actions are not in and of themselves a proof for Islam unless such actions and instructions had their root in the primary Islamic texts and the interpretations of the Muslim scholars.

Moreover, in Lahore Mir Manu (a Muslim governor) ordered all the Sikh women were asked to convert to Islam but they refused and he killed the babies by sticking them on the spears and garlands of their dead heads was made and hung around necks of those mothers- so what kind of "enlightened decisions" can these possibly be?

Here we have to begin by saying that Mir Manu was a governor that came much after Emperors Jahangir and Aurangzeb. So any decisions made cannot possibly be traced back to these Emperors.

And again we find that the narratives given for Mir Mannu's barbarity are wholly written by Sikhs without any outside corroboration. However, in general it seems that Mir Mannu is not afforded the same level of Islamic orthodoxy as Aurangzeb. In the field of warfare, there is unquestionable evidence that Mir Mannu fought not only Sikhs, but also various different Muslim invaders who were taking advantage of the crumbling Mughal Empire in order to assert their own authority over Punjab. So the charge of a "religious crusade against Sikhs" has to be thoroughly dismissed.

With respect to the claims of indiscriminate killing, the only reference we found in neutral works was that:

Even during Muin's lifetime small bands of Sikhs had been robbing the country and defying the Government in the region east of Lahor, especially in the Batala and Kalanur districts, and punitive expeditions had to be constantly sent out against them, sometimes under the governor in person. The Sikhs in that age were "helpless against artillery," and hence Mui very thoughtfully had 990 jizails made and employed them against the Sikh brigands. His detachments "ran after these wretches (up to) 28 kos, and slew them whenever they stood up to a fight. Whosoever brought a Sikh's head to Muin received a reward of Rs. ten for each man slain. Any soldier who captured a Sikh's horse could keep it as his own. If

his own horse perished in the campaign, another was given to him from the Government stables. (Miskin, 12.)

One expedition led against the Sikhs by Muin himself towards the close of 1752 is thus described by his page-. "When the Nawāb Sāhib (i.e., Muin-ul-mulk) was out on an administrative tour, in the Batālā district, he heard that a large body of Sikhs were causing disturbances in that neighbourhood, stopping the roads and ruining the cultivators. He sent Sayyid Jarniluddin Khan with his bakhshi Ghāzi Beg Khan to punish them. These officers marched to the scene, fought the Sikhs and put them to flight. Nine hundred of the Sikh infantry threw themselves into the small fort of Ramroti, close to Chak Guru Hargovind, which Janiiluddin immediately invested. After a few days the garrison rushed out sword in hand, fell upon the besiegers, and were all slain. (Miskin, 17.)

...wherever he heard of Sikh risings he sent Khwajah Mirza with troops to suppress them. The Sikhs who were captured alive were sent to hell by being beaten with wooden mallets . . . At times Adina Beg sent 40 or 50 Sikh captives from the (Jalandar) Doab district: they were killed with strokes of wooden hammers." (Miskin, 19.) Another fight with the Sikhs at which Miskin was present, during the subahdari of Muin's infant, is described in Miskin, 22-23.³⁹

We also read from an online source referencing the book *Later Mughal History of the Panjab (1707 - 1793)* written by Hari Ram Gupta where it is stated:

...Just then Khwajah Mirza presented himself before him with a few Sikh heads. He gave away prizes to the men who had cut off the heads and turned his attentions towards his own troops.⁴⁰

It is clear that the above treatment was being meted out to those Sikhs who had rebelled against the provincial government, and were not meant to be carried out on every single Sikh man, woman, and child that was to be found. The question of atrocities carried out on the common Sikh population does not arise from such quotes.

But even if we were to suppose that the stories of children being killed in front of their mothers were factually correct, it does not constitute a dark spot on the Islamic religion, since such actions are not sanctioned in Islam with respect to the treatment of non-combatants in time of warfare, so anything that may have been carried out in such times would be the personal fault and sin of those who gave out such orders, not of the Muslim religious scholars or the Islamic religion—which never approved of such acts.

³⁹ Fall of Mughal Empire, Chapter 10, pp. 425-427 (as accessed from:

<http://library.du.ac.in/xmlui/bitstream/handle/1/3069/Ch.10%20The%20panjab,1748-1754.pdf?sequence=3>)

⁴⁰ <http://www.thenews.com.pk/TodaysPrintDetail.aspx?ID=56949&Cat=6&dt=7/10/2011>, (Reference from pp.109-115 of the above-mentioned book as per the link)

Also, consider that Ahmed Shah Durrani came from Persia and he was a Muslim, he raped Hindu women and then Sikhs decided to do something about it until Sikhs defeated him in the battlefield.

As before, we would seriously contend the assertion that simply because Durrani was a Muslim, then his actions would be in accordance with Islamic rules of warfare. In many cases, and even today, the Muslims who set out for battle may not have a clear picture of what Islam requires of those who are engaged in warfare. This is not a blame to be put on Islam, but rather on the person and those who follow him, since it was their obligation to know the rules of Islam concerning the activity they sought to accomplish.

We do have to mention in here though, that Durrani did not specifically attack Hindus or Sikhs and leave out Muslims. Rather, he was known as an invader of whichever lands he could enter, be they lands inhabited by Muslims or non-Muslims. Additionally, the claims of raping women are also levied against Durrani's forces with regards to Muslim populations as well (we will not comment on the authenticity of such claims, but only bring up their existence), so it is incorrect to suppose that such a thing was done only out of spite for non-Muslims.⁴¹

Finally, we also have to mention in here that the statement 'then Sikhs decided to do something about it', is not entirely correct, as the Sikh community at that time would have been involved in constant warfare against any non-Sikh Army; thus, it is wrong to paint the situation as one of Sikhs saving Hindu women from oppression through waging war against Durrani, as a war against him would have materialized regardless of his treatment towards others.

But moreover he was reciting the verses of Quran.

Firstly, it has to be proven that Verses of the Qur'an were indeed being recited. Even then, it would not follow that the action being committed is a virtuous one, since recitation of Verses of the Qur'an does not mean that any other action done during its recitation will be termed as appropriate and correct.

Indeed, we can imagine any number of ignoble acts being committed during the recitation of the Qur'an, or of the Qur'an being recited in conditions where it is prohibited to do so, and the ignobility of the act or the prohibition being referred to will not be lifted simply because Verses of the Qur'an are being recited.

African Slavery was also started by Islam.

⁴¹ For those who say that Muslims are disproportionately guilty of raping women during times of war, we say that even in recent times this is the ignoble fate of the women whenever a victorious army enters a location. Indeed, this is one of the probabilistic reasons why slavery was allowed to continue in Islam, since it would undoubtedly constrict how sexual relations could be conducted with female captives of war, in addition to making shelter and clothing obligatory upon her master, rather than leaving the women at the mercy of anyone and of the situation they find themselves in (for example, of having no monetary inflow, thus having to resort to prostitution in order to collect money and survive).

This is really not relevant to Sikh-Muslim discussions, since the opponent is simply bringing any and all objections that are normally raised against Islam.

In spite of this, we can still make use of this opportunity to mention that slavery in Africa was not started by Muslims. In fact, slavery had been known to humanity for as long as mankind and warfare existed on this Earth, and Africa was no exception to this rule. That is why we read that:

*For thousands of years, armies at war have taken prisoners. A prisoner might have been a soldier, farmer or artisan who lived in the conquered kingdoms. They were usually made to work for the winning army as slaves. Slaves were used in many kingdoms, such as Ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome, for labor...*⁴²

Thus, the institution of slavery was known to all peoples and cultures at the moment of Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ appearance, and the Islamic religion simply provided guidelines to be acted upon with respect to a practice that was already present.

And as was the case with the treatment of people by the Muslim rulers and army generals towards the Sikhs and Hindus, the treatment of slaves by Muslims has to be considered in the context of whatever Islam has allowed and disallowed in this respect. If such practices conform to the principles laid down in Islamic Law, then the action is (hopefully) approved by Allah and if not then there is no approval from Allah. But just as we had mentioned before, the actions of a non-Prophet (and in this case, of Muslims whose names are not even mentioned by our opponent) cannot be taken as proof of what Islam allows and does not allow, and any attempt to tie this two together goes against the very foundations of the Islamic religion.

So, Guru Sahib preached Oneness of God, showed the people that there is devotion, practice, kindness, and relieved the pain of suffering of humanity. He said "The Whole World is following in the ways of rituals. One calls himself a Hindu, one calls himself a Muslim, and they are quarreling with each other. The Muslims say that their book is superior, and they compare it to other books. The Lord is One, but the whole world is following in the ways of Satan." (Recorded in Mecca by Bhai Mardana, a follower of our founder).

This statement shows one of the prime problems in Sikhism: If it is claimed that the different religions are doing totally wrong in following rituals then how is it possible that converting to the true path is sinful? (Here we are not considering the obvious fact that the Sikh "Gurus" were proselytizing towards their religion during their travels and their lives in general, but rather we are just going by

⁴² http://www.africanculturalcenter.org/4_5slavery.html

what the opponent has given us in their statements about Sikhism and conversion).

Not only is it said that the different religions are merely wrong, but that they are “following in ways of Satan”. Then how can it be ever imagined that the Sikh is content to not seek converts to their religion, and is happy to see people following the footsteps of Satan? Is it not intellectually reprehensible that on one hand the Sikh religion considers converting to another religion –even to Sikhism– as sinful and advocates religious plurality, while on the other hand it states that all the non-Sikh world is following the ways of Satan?

Consider that in Islam, we do say that other religions are wrong and their followers are indeed steeped in ignorance and following the ways of Satan. However, we Muslims seek to show the truth to the world, and to guide the people to the path of truth and salvation, so that they will desist from their evil ways and be followers of the true path.

Now I have to make a quotation from a Sikh scripture known as Dasam Granth, chapter Akal Ustat, where it is said:

Waheguru (God) Says "Recognize all Human Race as One".

Does the Quran make such a clear statement?

Before we show what the Qur'an has to say, we need to emphasize that recognizing the apparent equal capability of everyone to reach the same exalted position with respect to following the true religion of Allah and availing of His Mercy and His Reward does not mean that our differences are totally forgotten, since they are a reality of our earthly existence, and are in fact a sign that anyone can reach towards Allah the Exalted, whatever his temporal condition may be.

Now, what we do find in the Qur'an is the saying:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً

O mankind! Be careful of your duty to your Lord Who created you from a single soul and from it created its mate and from them twain hath spread abroad a multitude of men and women. (Qur'an 4:1)

We also read:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا ۚ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ

O mankind! Lo! We have created you male and female, and have made you nations and tribes that ye may know one another. Lo! the noblest of you, in the sight of Allah, is the best in conduct. Lo! Allah is Knower, Aware. (Qur'an 49:13)

Thus, what we have is a distinction based on fearing Allah and obeying His Commandments. This is said so that the people reading the Qur'an come to a realization that in spite of our earthly differences, the only difference that will be considered in the Day of Judgment is the distinction based on following the path of Allah and submitting to His Commands.

You Muslims talk about Satan. Well, we don't believe in the concept of Satan to make one afraid of things. We also do not believe in Hellfire, the reason being that Sikh scripture is about how to make use of this life.

The knowledge of the existence of Satan is known decisively due to his mention in the Holy Qur'an and the other primary Islamic texts. There is nothing strange about Allah creating a being which incites mankind to perform evil acts. Also, it is not necessary that the concept of Satan would make a person afraid of anything, as it could be used as further motivation to keep the true believer vigilant of all the evil suggestions he may experience throughout his life.

Besides, this is the way the world works even if Satan had not been present, since there are those created beings who invite towards good and those created beings who invite towards evil. So discussing the existence of Satan seems like a very insignificant matter, especially when we both agree that God has created those who incite towards bad deeds.

Coming to the matter of Hellfire, the existence of Hellfire is also something that is known solely through the mention of it in the primary Islamic texts. We cannot say that the existence of Hellfire is rationally impossible, since we know that it is within the possibilities that Allah creates a certain place that is full of punishment, kept for those who disobey His Commands and refuse to follow His Way.

Now, there are some who say that the existence of Hellfire was made up as a way of getting people to follow the injunctions of a given religion (say, Islam). To this we say that we have already mentioned the rational possibility of Hellfire, along with its certainty through scriptural means.

So as is always the case, we urge those who say something against those matters that are only known through scriptural means to first study the theology of Islam, along with the proofs showing that the Qur'an is the revelation from Allah to mankind, and concentrate their attention on these issues before moving on to anything else.

But we will make a small comment on the 'fear factor' being alluded to in here, by saying that mankind by his innate nature always longs for that which will keep him satisfied and pleased. This satisfaction and pleasure may come with respect to material things, or it may come with respect to spiritual matters.

With respect to material things, we all know that humans covet to amass as much wealth, fame, and power as they can (and this is what satisfaction and pleasure are in this arena), and are afraid of losing such wealth, fame, and power (the 'fear' portion of them is manifested in their wanting to hold on to such things and not lose them).

In the field of spirituality, there is also the longing for being close to Allah (in the sense of obeying Him and carrying out His Commands, not in the sense of actual literal proximity). But in this field of spiritual matters also, there are those for whom the mere exhortation to be thankful to Allah for all that He has bestowed upon them is enough for them to engage in perpetual worship and observance of His Commands. For such people then, the worship itself is the source of satisfaction, since their spiritual states are very high in comparison to normal men.

But for those who get distracted by the world, or who wish to go against what Allah has decreed, there is another factor that they have to consider, which is the existence of Paradise and Hellfire. So for such people, the existence of these two places serves as a reminder that the obedience or disobedience of Allah is directly related to them. If they are heedless concerning the message to thank Allah for the favors He has bestowed on them, then they will not be heedless concerning the bodily and spiritual rewards or punishments that are awaiting them in the Afterlife, and they will hopefully tread the correct path when they see how their actions will have an effect on them in the next world. So the 'fear factor' in this case can also serve as the spark needed to make the person aware of what awaits him if he is unwilling to follow the path provided to him by Allah the Exalted.

So in conclusion, if the person comes to the right path by thinking of how he should be thankful to Allah the Exalted, then this is very good and the best possible way to come to the true path of Allah. If he comes to the path through the remembrance of what awaits him of rewards in the next world, then that is also good. But if none of these two have any effect on him, then he must also remember that there is a punishment for those who disobey Allah's Commands, and that this punishment is directly related to him, and that he will not be able to avoid this penalty.

The above was about the 'fear factor' and how it relates to Hellfire. There was another comment that was brought up, in which it was indirectly said that the existence of Hellfire as far as Islam is concerned makes Muslims unable to use this life properly, as opposed to Sikhs who 'know how to use this life'.

To this our response is that the definition of using our life properly is only through following the rules of Islam. Even for the one who truly comes to the correct path thanks to the reminder of Hellfire, he will do his best to never commit even one evil deed. His mind will be concentrated on how to avoid this punishment, and he will lead his life in the best way he can according to the rules of Islam. He may even be able to look beyond the punishment of the Hellfire and see the sweetness and satisfaction that obeying Allah and treading the path of Islam offer in and of themselves.

Even if he does not come to this final stage, since the end result is that he follows the path of Islam properly and does not do the actions of the evil people, then he has certainly made the best use of his life.

So the Sikh religion considers this life as precious because God has given this human life to come to realize God or to become one with God. So as you may know, the one who has realized God one does not need to worry about afterlife or hellfire.

There are two matters to be considered here. The first one is about the one who has realized God, and how he does not need to worry about the Afterlife or Hellfire. (We will only discuss the Islamic view on this, since as we will mention below, the Sikh idea in this sphere is very much flawed).

Before we discuss this point, we have to define what 'realizing God' means for the Muslim. It means that he understands that the entire Universe and all that it contains is the Creation of Allah, and that our only goal is to obey Him and follow Him to the best of our abilities. He also knows that there is no change that occurs in the Universe except that Allah has willed it and brought it into existence, to the point that even the person's worship is a Creation of Allah.

With this in mind, we say that for the person who has 'realized God, his main concern is the greatness of Allah and the huge favors that Allah has bestowed upon him, and his inner sense of obligation to thank Allah for all of this. But it does not mean that he will totally neglect the fact that there is an Afterlife and that there is Paradise and Hellfire, since there are part of the true things that Allah has mentioned in His Revelation, and there can be no journey towards the path of Felicity without acknowledging the true Existence of all that has been mentioned by Allah and given to us by Muhammad ﷺ.

We would also mention that the Afterlife is indeed something that he will be mindful of, since death will be the point when he will (by the grace of Allah) have the full spiritual (and bodily) pleasures and enjoyments without the sufferings of this world.

But the true believer, even if he is at a very high stage of 'realization' will know that the worship he performs and the right path he is on is not a function of his

own doing, but rather a Mercy and Grace from Allah the Exalted. This is why 'Hellfire' is also an important place to keep in mind, since it reminds every single Muslim, and especially the one who is on the higher stages of realization, that if Allah willed, He could snatch all of this away from him in an instant and make him of the losers in this world and in the next. This thought then, restrains the Muslim from uninhibited carelessness concerning the true nature of the worship and the path he is on, and makes him remember again and again the reality of his past, current and future existence, and the exaltedness and greatness of Allah.

There is a second issue though that we have to discuss as well, and this is concerning the Sikh ideology that this life has been granted to us by God so that 'we may become one with God'. We have already mentioned the problems inherent in this type of view earlier in our discussion. To summarize, it is impossible in itself for someone to claim that a limited body can become God after a series of spiritual acts, no matter how profound and exhaustive such spiritual exercises may be. And for us, this is in fact one of the strong proofs showing that the Sikh religion is upon error, even before we involve ourselves into any conversation on the subject of their "Gurus" or their history. Thus, we know that the objective set out by the Sikhs is unattainable and logically contradictory, and if the objective is erroneous, then all that follows to reach that aim will be devoid of benefit.

(It could be objected that the "unity" referred to in here is an abstract non-literal unity. If such is the real purport of the statement, then it is framed very poorly. Secondly, it does not seem to us that the 'unity' is so abstract and non-literal, since we know from previous comments that the Sikh religion seeks complete transcendence for the human being into a "Formless Realm" with God, and this is something that we do not accept for reasons we have previously mentioned).

Sikh religion is a god-conscious religion you can know this from our Anand Sahib, which says:

The jewelled melodies and their related celestial harmonies have come to sing the Word of the Shabad.

The Lord dwells within the minds of those who sing the Shabad.

Says Nanak, I am in ecstasy, for I have found my True Guru. ((1))

O my mind, remain always with the Lord.

Remain always with the Lord, O my mind, and all sufferings will be forgotten.

He will accept You as His own, and all your affairs will be perfectly arranged.

Our Lord and Master is all-powerful to do all things, so why forget Him from your mind?

Says Nanak, O my mind, remain always with the Lord. ((2))

O my True Lord and Master, what is there which is not in Your celestial home?

Everything is in Your home; they receive, unto whom You give.

Constantly singing Your Praises and Glories, Your Name is enshrined in the mind.

The divine melody of the Shabad vibrates for those, within whose minds the Naam abides.

Says Nanak, O my True Lord and Master, what is there which is not in Your home? ((3))

The above is a hymn, but without an underlying true basis on which to stand, all religious oratory and praises loses its meaning. But even from this religious hymn itself we have some issues that we need to raise, such as the phrase “*The Lord dwells within the minds of those who sing the Shabad*”. If this is presented in its literal meaning (and we have no reason to believe otherwise based on what we know of Sikh ideology), then we have the same problems we have mentioned before with respect to the impossibility of literal union between the creation and the Created.

In fact, the above reminds us of the position taken by the majority of Hindus, when they claim that the ‘Mind’ or the ‘Self’ is literally Divine, and we as humans need to uplift the veil of ignorance so that we can be Divine again. We will not elongate the discussion about this, but we will point our readers towards the full discussion which can be found [here](#).

Even though the Sikh ideology may not completely match with the Hindu one, the main problematic contention of literal union between the mind and the Divine remains, and this is what we have to stress whenever it appears.

Now, if our Sikh opponent merely wished to say that his religion is urging its followers to be conscious of God, then this is really not a major problem, since there are many references in the primary Islamic texts pointing towards the importance of remembering Allah, such as the following Qur’anic Verses:

وَاذْكُرْ رَبَّكَ فِي نَفْسِكَ تَضَرُّعًا وَخِيفَةً وَدُونَ الْجَهْرِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ بِالْغُدُوِّ وَالْآصَالِ وَلَا تَكُنْ مِنَ الْغَافِلِينَ

And do thou (O Muhammad) remember thy Lord within thyself humbly and with awe, below thy breath, at morn and evening. And be not thou of the neglectful. (Qur'an 7:205)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ ذِكْرًا كَثِيرًا

O ye who believe! Remember Allah with much remembrance. (Qur'an 33:41)

There are a number of other excerpts from the primary Islamic texts which may be shown, but this should be sufficient for our readers to understand that Islam definitely encourages the Muslims to remember Allah in everything that they do, and to live their lives according to this remembrance of Allah that is in their minds and hearts.

The Sikh religion has answer to all the questions of Islam. I mean, there is a major difference between us: Your religion is much more concerted about the afterlife so that they can get entry to paradise or heaven but our religion concentrates, as I have said earlier, on the Court of God also known as Sachkhand, which is above paradise or heaven. You know that an educated person will realize that the Court of God is higher than paradise. Yet you Muslims have a hard time accepting this fact!

Bringing up the claim that 'educated persons' would accept the Sikh version of events above the Muslim one is simply a way to belittle the Muslims without any true substance being presented. Besides, the above had been previously answered in its place, but we have to reiterate that the idea of a 'Sachkand', where there is literal union with God, is incorrect and logically impossible.

If we want to talk from the point of view of 'educated persons' we have to consider that the state which is impossible cannot be above the state which is merely possible. (That is, in the mind's eye, we can imagine a place called Paradise where those who achieve righteousness in this life are able to live in perfect bliss, while not being in a literal union with God. But we can never imagine a 'Court' where the human soul becomes one with God, due to the contradictions inherent in that scenario. The possibility of Paradise and the impossibility of the 'Sachkand' is something we can deduce from our minds alone. It is through the primary Islamic texts though, that we know about the certainty of Paradise. Our bringing up of this matter in terms of 'merely possible vs. impossible' was because of the claim that the rationally impossible is above the rationally possible, which is a fallacy that has to be pointed out).

God says that every soul is responsible for its own actions, be they Hindu, Muslim, Christian or Sikh. They can be judged in their own religion but there should be no condemnation of souls in an afterlife as it is mentioned in the Quran.

Indeed, every soul is responsible for his actions, and the soul is also going to suffer the consequences of the evil decisions it took. But to say that the soul will be judged as per their own religions is not correct, because the different religions differ on major points, including fundamental ideas about who God is, and even about whether He exists. So it is impossible for all these divergent ways to be simultaneously true. And it should be known that Allah expects the person to conform to the true way that He has revealed once this way becomes known to the person. If the person for some reason has never in his life heard about the true way, this is another matter that is not to be discussed here again, but if the person has indeed heard the message then there is no excuse for him to consider the truth and falsehood as one and the same. (Regarding the condemnation of souls in the afterlife, this has been answered before, so there is no need to bring this matter up again).

Mentioning the Hellfire is like a pre-judged action of God. It is like saying for certain that God will put the disbelievers in Hellfire, but you never know what God is going to do in afterlife. Since the Qur'an specifically mentions the Hellfire and nothing else, it forgets that God has His own freewill. So by specifically mentioning Hellfire and only the Hellfire, this puts limitations on the working of God.

This comment was made probably due to the ignorance of the opponent about the Qur'an and how it relates to the knowledge of Allah. The reality is that the Qur'an does not contain a falsehood, since otherwise it would not be the Word of Allah. As the Muslims believe, the copies of the Qur'an that we recite and write on the pages are an expression of the Eternal Speech of Allah, the Speech of Allah pertains to His Knowledge, and it is impossible that His Knowledge contains falsehood, since otherwise it would be ignorance, not knowledge.

So whatever Allah is informing us about the events that will occur to His Creatures (whether believers or disbelievers) is true, and it does not limit Allah in any way. In fact, if someone were to say that Allah would do something other than (for example) sending the disbelievers to Hellfire, in that case a flaw would be attributed to Allah; the reason would be that the Speech of Allah would contain a falsehood, and this would mean that Allah's Knowledge would be flawed since it would contain falsehood in it. And it is obvious that such an assertion cannot be attributed to Allah the Exalted.

With respect to 'God's Freewill' being compromised, we say that once we know that Allah does certain things to certain categories of people, then the discussion about Allah's Will changing (from what He has told us) does not come up. This is

because Allah is informing us about what will be the future for those people, and the future for those people cannot come about except through the Knowledge, Will, and Power of Allah. And since we know that Allah is not in time (and that changes are not attributable to Him), then we know that the realization of His Will and Power with respect to the 'future' (that is, what is future for us) is as perfect as the realization of this Will and Power with respect to the past and present. Just as we are not in doubt that the events of the past and present have occurred while not compromising the Will of Allah, so we should not be in doubt about the Will of Allah regarding future events.

The Qur'an could have also mentioned something else other than hellfire as the consequence for people who don't convert to Islam. But what we see in the Qur'an are passages such as:

Allah has sickened their hearts, a painful doom is theirs because they lie. (2:10)

Disbelievers will be burnt with the hellfire. (2:39, 40)

All non-Muslims are rejected by Allah after they die. (3:116)

Those who disbelieve, will be fuel for the fire. (3:10)

"And whoever worships along with Allaah any other object of worship [like SGGS], they have NO PROOFS for that. His judgment will be with his Lord. Indeed the disbelievers will never succeed." (Qur'an 23:117)

War is ordained by Allah, and all Muslims must be willing to fight whether they like it or not. (2:216)

This clearly shows Islam's so-called love for humanity. It proves my point that surely you cannot meet God with such hateful verses?

To begin with, some of the 'passages' of the Qur'an above are actually the product of paraphrasing the text of the Qur'an while presenting it as the literal translation, which is incorrect to do.

Coming to the issue of 'meeting with God', what we have said all along is that the disbelievers have to modify their beliefs and lifestyle if they want to 'meet God'. It is not possible for the disbelievers to continue upon their wrong belief systems while claiming that they will reach spiritual bliss and salvation.

But this is a censure of the person due to his wrong beliefs and acts; if the person changes his ways and enters the fold of the true religion, then there is nothing negative that the Qur'an or Islam in general say against him. In fact, he obtains many rewards for changing his ways, including the great blessing of having his previous evil deeds turned into good deeds. So this shows that Islam encourages everyone, be they Muslim or non-Muslim, to tread upon the correct

path and obtain the physical and spiritual rewards that are commensurate to the efforts they put in and the difficulties they have faced along the path. (Again, the issue of Hellfire and its certainty had been dealt with before, and the reader may go back to the previous portions of our discussion where this was mentioned).

Concerning the issue of Islam's 'love for humanity', we have to ask our opponent: Where did the idea come up that Allah should love all of humanity for all time, regardless of the sins they commit?

It is clear that such 'love' cannot exist, since it would mean that disobedience to the Commandments of Allah and the belittling of that which Allah has ordered would also be loved by Allah, and such a claim would be a contradiction (since we know from other texts that Allah's displeasure and punishment is tied to disobeying Him). Rather, what Islam loves is that humanity walks upon the path of truth, and gives up the incorrect religious dogmas and beliefs, and that they not be swayed by those who are misguided.

Before we move on, we need to make a commentary with respect to two of the Verses presented above. The first Verse from Surah al-Mu'mnun, Verse number 117. This Verse is talking about the reality of the disbeliever, in that he has no proofs to support him in his claim to worship something other than Allah, and in following a religion other than Islam.

And it is true that the disbelievers will never succeed, since success is only through following the way of Allah the Exalted. If the non-Muslim wishes to speak with us about what he thinks are evidences for the correctness of his way, then those amongst us who are qualified will engage him in discussion concerning his claims. But to dismiss the fact that the disbelievers will not be successful is incorrect, since even according to his religion, those who take a path other than the correct religion cannot attain success. So the Qur'an and the Islamic religion in general are not making a claim that is unimaginable, but rather our claims are logically sound and correct.

Coming to the second Verse, this is a paraphrase of the following Verse of the Qur'an:

كُتِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِتَالُ وَهُوَ كُرْهُ لَكُمْ وَعَسَىٰ أَن تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ وَعَسَىٰ أَن تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَّكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

Warfare is ordained for you, though it is hateful unto you; but it may happen that ye hate a thing which is good for you, and it may happen that ye love a thing which is bad for you. Allah knoweth, ye know not. (Qur'an 2:216)

The injunction for warfare is indeed given here, and our opponent points out that all Muslims must be willing to fight. While this is true insofar as the injunction of Jihad is an obligation in Islam, yet it is not the type of obligation that compels every individual Muslim to carry it out at all times and in all circumstances.

There is no need to elongate the discussion on this topic, but it is sufficient to say that the injunction to warfare is a communal obligation upon the Muslim community, and is guided by a set of rules that cannot be discarded. So it is definitely not correct to imagine that Islam encourages all Muslims to rampage left and right and to kill and destroy anything and everything that they find of the non-Muslims and their properties. This has not been what Islam enjoins, nor can we envisage such a situation to be allowed by the rules of Islam, since the rules of Islam accentuate the high worth of proper bravery and valor in fighting for the cause of Allah, and do not reduce warfare to senseless killing and destruction.

We're not ignorant that Islam looks for converts and says that their way is the only way. But for us it is about quality not quantity. By not looking for converts we are showing respect to people of other faiths because in that way there is no argument between both parties. Both parties share and talk with each other and respect each other's beliefs. In that way harmony is created between each other at the same time. But why is it so difficult for Islam to do the same?

No Muslim says that because we look for converts this then means that we are not looking for good-quality Muslims to live on this Earth. Rather, we look to teach Muslims and non-Muslims concerning the true fundamentals of the Islamic religion, so that all humanity can understand what sets Islam apart from the other religions and systems of life in the world, and what gives Islam the preponderance in terms of correctness. So we are looking for both quality and quantity when talking about Muslims.

Concerning the lack of argumentation, we agree that it is detrimental to insult other people's religions. But we as Muslims also have to be resolute in pointing out the faults inherent in other religious systems through the best means available to us. And our opponent will have to agree that this is an appropriate method for discussion, since our goal is to arrive at the truth so that we may follow this truth in our lives.

I felt it was about time to give an answer as you Muslims have been maligning our religion for too long. You cannot always keep quoting things out of context without any proof or thorough study. This is it for now.

If the Sikh feels that we are not saying things correctly or that we are quoting passages out of context they can tell us where they think such misunderstanding or misquoting has taken place and then our dialogue can move forward. The Muslims who are qualified will never be afraid of engaging in a thorough study of other religions, since it will help them to understand exactly where such religions and ideologies have gone wrong, and how Islam shows its correctness in the face of different questions raised up by different types of people.

To conclude for now, we say that our opponents (be they Sikh or members of other religions) should study the theological underpinning of Islam properly and objectively, and ask us the questions or objections they may have in their minds. We will do our utmost to provide them with the correct answers either from ourselves or from our scholars who are qualified to answer such questions. The only requirement is that such people should be humble enough to learn about Islam, and not wish to present varied and unrelated arguments against Islam at every turn. If they follow this path, we are hopeful that they will come to the correct understanding about Islam, and that they will follow the path of truth, by the will of Allah.